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# VALUES, SOCIOLOGY, AND THE OPTIMIZING SOCIETY

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by

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ABSTRACT

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The current debate over the place of values within the profession of sociology is examined with the intention of furthering debate by (1) adding clarity in the presentation of present major positions, (2) suggesting weaknesses within those positions, and (3) offering a position which goes beyond present positions and which might serve as a new focus to the debate. The dominant position of "value-freedom" is presented along with closely related positions. An examination of extra-epistemic values as they exist and seem likely to continue to exist in sociology suggests that the "value free" position is inadequate both descriptively and prescriptively. Other counter positions are also found to be inadequate in allowing or justifying the value choices that are likely to be made in sociology. Two competing bases for the choice of a high level decision or goal orientation for the profession are examined - the "sceptics view" and the "naturalistic-evolutionary view." While the two positions are radically different in important ways, both suggest and offer support for the choice of an orientation that seeks social structures and societies

which optimize alternatives open to societal members. The orientation is further clarified, additional reasons for its adoption by sociologists are offered, its relation to the profession's epistemic orientation of "truth" is considered, and some possible weaknesses or limitations of the orientation are discussed.

# CHAPTER I.

## INTRODUCTION

An important on-going debate has existed in sociology over the place of values within the discipline. While pre-occupation with self-conscious concerns in any discipline may be debilitating, consideration of what the discipline should value and what directions it should take is useful and necessary. It is and will probably remain an on-going debate in that divergent positions are strongly felt and the issues involved are complex and interrelated. The work to follow does not presume to resolve the debate. It more modestly hopes to further the debate by (1) adding clarity in the presentation of current major positions, (2) suggesting weaknesses within those positions, (3) presenting two contrasting bases for a new position, and (4) offering a position that goes beyond present positions and which might serve as a new focus for the debate.

Since the term "value" plays a major role in the work to follow, it would be well to offer a working definition of it. This task is made easier since traditionally there seems to have been a surprisingly high degree of agreement as to the meaning of the term in its general usage by pro-

fessionals who are most highly involved with the term (primarily philosophers, and to lesser extents social and natural scientists). Frankena (1967:230) suggests that because there has crept into the usage the high degree of ambiguity and looseness that heavily used terms often engender, this notion can best be defined by "keeping to more traditional terms such as 'good' and 'right.'" As a result, we take as a broad working definition of the term "value:" "beliefs about classes of objects, situations, actions, and wholes composed of them in regards the extent that they are good, right, obligatory, or ought to be." This definition we take to be consistent with most traditional uses of the term in philosophy (for example, see Hancock, 1974:1-11; Frankena, 1967; 1973; Bahm, 1974). Further, while the term "value" is seldom explicitly defined when sociologists and other social scientists discuss the role of values in their respective disciplines, this working definition also seems consistent with their usage as well. While there may be considerable agreement at a general level on the usage of the term "value," there is considerable disagreement as to how some of the key words used in defining value, such as "good" or "obligatory" are themselves to be defined, as well as major disagreements as to theories of value and justification of those theories. (Some of these

disagreements will be considered later in this work.) Further, there is some divergence as to distinctions and qualifications that might or should be made in the use of the term. Since some of them do add clarity to our thinking about the term they will be mentioned briefly in this introduction. Before doing so, however, it should be pointed out that this working definition conceives of "value" rather broadly and covers quite a bit of ground, lumping together several distinguishable types of judgments of value.

Most social scientists and surprisingly large numbers of philosophers use the term "value" alternately or simultaneously to refer to beliefs about on one hand what is "good" and on the other hand what is"obligatory." However, these two uses of the term are distinguishable. Although such a distinction may not be necessary for some types of general discussion, for the sake of clarity it seems worthwhile to follow the lead of philosophers such as Frankena (1973) by keeping in mind sub-categories of the term "value judgments." Thus, within the broad category of value judgments we may distinguish "judgments of obligation" and "judgments of value." "Judgments of obligation" refer to certain <u>actions or kinds of actions</u> which we consider right, wrong, obligatory, a duty, or ought or ought not to be done. A second type of value judgment, a "judgment of value" (with "value" used in a more specific sense), refers <u>not to actions or kinds of</u>

actions but rather to persons, objects, states of affairs, motivations, characteristics, etc. We may consider them to be good, bad, virtuous, blameworthy, despicable, and so forth (Frankena, 1973:9).

Further, within "judgments of value" we may distinguish judgments of "moral" and "non-moral" value. Frankena (1973:9-10) points out that judgments of moral value refer to persons, motives, intentions, character traits, and the like. Examples of statements that include judgments of moral value are: My father is a good man; Jones' character is admirable; benevolence is a virtue; and jealousy is an ignoble motive. There are also judgments of non-moral value, in which it is not persons, motivations, etc. that are evaluated, but "all sorts of other things such as cars, paintings, experiences, forms of government, and what not. We say they are good, bad, desirable, undesirable, and so on, but we do not mean that they are morally good or bad, since they are generally not the kinds of things that can be morally good or bad" (Frankena, 1973:9-10). Examples of non-moral value judgments are: That is a good car; Miniver Cheevy did not have a very good life; pleasure is a good in itself; and democracy is the best form of government.

While discussions of ethics usually deal with moral obligation, for the sake of completeness we may similarly distinguish moral from non-moral obligation, even though

both refer to certain actions or kinds of actions. Examples of judgments of moral obligation are: We ought to keep our promises; I ought to be charitable; we have an obligation to fight for our country; and all men have a right to rebel when oppressed. Non-moral judgments of obligation, while important to the practical aspects of everyday life, are not usually considered in ethical discourse. Frankena (1973:11) offers the following examples of non-moral judgments of obligation: You ought to buy a new suit; you just have to go to that concert; in building a bookcase one should use nails, not Scotch Tape; and the right thing to do on fourth down with thirteen yards to go is to punt.

The sub-categories of the general term "value judgments" are represented diagrammatically in Figure 1. Again, such distinctions are not crucial to all forms of discourse dealing with values, as for example in certain general discussions of whether values have any place at all within a discipline. However, the distinctions often do seem very valuable both because the different types of value judgments often demand different sorts of justifications, and because there may be said to exist different types of relationships between them.

Thus, for example, judgments of moral and non-moral obligation probably demand different sorts of justification. The type of justifications that one might offer for a

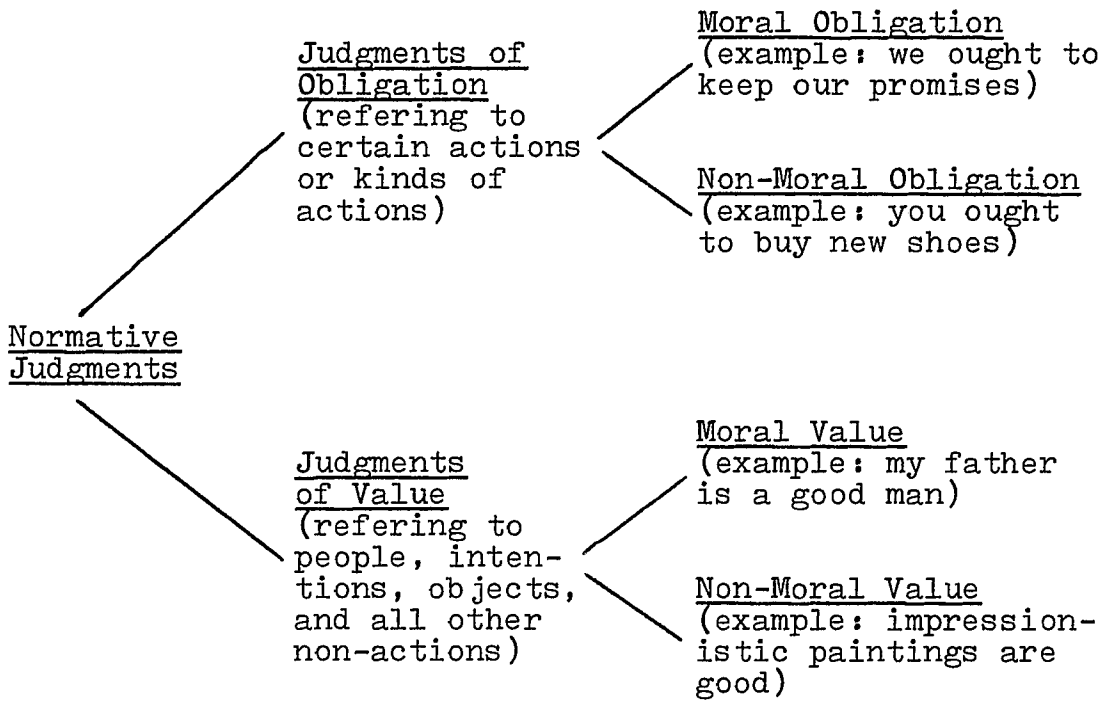


Figure 1
Diagrammatic Representation of
Sub-Categories of Normative Judgments

judgment of non-moral obligation such as "members of the army ought to keep their rifles clean and in good repair," would probably be considerably different from the type of justification that would need to be offered for a judgment of moral obligation such as "one ought to join the army if one's country is threatened." Further, the sub-categories seem useful in that differences in positions often may hinge on explicit or implicit differences as to the relations between the types of value judgments. For example, two persons may both judge societies of a certain sort, say just societies, to be good. They may strongly differ as to what actions, if any, they are obligated to perform as a result of this judgment of value upon which they agree. One may claim "since I value a just society, I am obligated to do all in my power to make this society more just. In short, I ought to do that which brings about that which is valued." The other, however, may hold equally adamantly "although I also value just societies, this by no means obligates me to act in such as way as to attain such a society. While I may approve of your attempting to bring about a just society, my valuing such a society incurs no personal obligation upon me to help bring it about." What both parties are disagreeing about is the relation between judgments of value and judgments of obligation. Not distinguishing between types of value judgments often means that the exact nature of the disagree-

ment is not pinpointed, and the discussion cannot be shifted to a more fruitful focus.

The work to follow deals primarily with questions of actions of individual sociologists and of the discipline as a whole, and as such has a primary concern with questions that would fall in the area which Frankena terms "judgments of obligation." Since the present author personally feels uncomfortable with such terms as "obligation" and "duty," and since arguments in the social science literature are seldom argued in such a strong fashion, such concepts do not appear here and the discussion centers around what we as a profession and as individuals ought or ought not to do. Thus the types of questions that are addressed are: Ought sociologists to seek knowledge purely for its own sake or ought they to seek it to be used in actualizing other valued ends; how should knowledge be disseminated; ought sociologists to work for one group within society as opposed to others; and ought sociologists to act in ways so as to change societies in certain directions as opposed to others? The ultimate concern of this work then is to consider various positions which conflict as to what sort of value orientation(s) should guide the practicing sociologist and the discipline in choosing between future courses of action and evaluating past actions.

It should be pointed out that while the focus of the

various positions to be discussed is "judgments of obligation," considerable attention is devoted to discussions of "judgments of value" made in each position. This is due to the fact that while on many levels there is considerable disagreement between the various positions, they share an implicit "teleological" theory of obligation which sees judgments of obligation as intimately linked to judgments of value. They are "teleological" in that judgments about whether an act ought or ought not to be carried out are based upon the probably <u>future</u> <u>consequences</u> of the action. More specifically, teleological theories hold that we ought to do those things which are likely to lead to states of affairs that would be judged to be of value. Thus, "judgments of obligation" demand discussion of "judgments of value" if one holds a teleological theory. Teleological theories of obligation can perhaps be understood more clearly by contrasting them to "deontological theories of obligation." Deontological theories argue that that which ought to be done is not dependent wholly or in part upon the good produced by an act, but rather that there are characteristics of certain acts <u>themselves</u> that make them obligatory apart from their consequences. Thus, a deontological view might be that "one ought to keep promises" because it is inherently just, or because it is commanded by God, etc., and not because doing so would lead to some valued consequen-

ces. (For a more extended discussion of teleological and deontological theories of obligation, see Frankena, 1973:14-33.) The thing to bear in mind is that the various positions discussed in this work, while differing at many levels, share an implicit teleological theory of obligation which chooses between acts not on the basis of some inherent characteristics which entail obligation, but rather on the basis of the value of the act's probable consequences.

There are a few additional distinctions and qualifications concerning the term "value" in its broadest sense that should be made in order to help the reader more firmly fix the way the term will be used in the work to follow. First, while the term "value" is used here as a noun, it also has verb forms such as "to value," "valuing," "valued," and "valuating." Terms such as "valuing" are used to suggest an active process such as the act of comparison, rather than a more passive notion of the results of the process. Some in fact would prefer the verb form in that, among other reasons, it does not allow one to hold a view of values that sees them as unchanging or eternal. While this perspective should be kept in mind, it also seems that we can discuss at any point in the continuous valuing process the products of it, and as a result the noun usage, in addition to being the predominant convention, also has some merit. At any rate, when those

who most often employ the verb form use it, they seem to use it in ways consistent with the working definition. "For Dewey and Richard M. Hare it [valuation] covers judgments about what is right, wrong, obligatory, or just, as well as judgments about what is good, bad, desirable, or worthwhile" (Frankena, 1967:230).

Dewey (1939 and elsewhere) also distinguishes two forms of valuing. The term "valuing" may be used to refer to mere desiring or liking: this may be described by such terms as "to prize," "to esteem," "to hold dear," or "to like." On the other hand, "valuing" can be said to involve more than mere desiring or liking, but instead to involve active reflection and comparison which may be described by such terms as "to appraise," "to evaluate," or "to valuate." The working definition is in line with this second usage. While in common parlance we often use the term to refer to personal preferences, as in "I value chocolate over vanilla ice cream," the term is not used in this sense here but rather refers to judgments of higher level value, with significant social rather than merely personal implications. Thus we distinguish between personal preference and value judgments (although value judgments also may have influence on some types of personal preference), and recognize values (as does C.I. Lewis, 1969: 3-5) even in discussions of individual ethics, in relation to human groups, societies, and mankind generally.

Sociologists have of course been quick to recognize values as primarily social in nature, even though they may be internalized by individuals. Philosophers have also come to recognize this, as this passage on morality by Frankena indicates:

> Now, morality in the sense indicated is, in one aspect at least, a social enterprise, not just a discovery or invention of the individual for his own guidance. Like one's language, state, or church, it exists before the individual, who is inducted into it and becomes more or less of a participant in it, and it goes on existing after him. Moreover, it is not social merely in the sense of being a system governing the relations of one individual to others...it is also largely social in its origins, sanctions, and functions (Frankena, 1973:6).

The distinction between "value" as the term is used here in its important social sense, and personal preferences, can perhaps be most clearly realized when we recognize that the two often conflict. Individually, we often possess strongly held personal preferences for certain acts. It is often precisely the group and societal level values which we have internalized that prevent us from acting in the directions of our preferences. Similarly, the possession of values often works to compel us to act in ways that would not occur if the matter were one of simple personal preference.

Further, since both are beliefs, and since both are beliefs that are pre-eminently social even when internalized by individuals, it is also well to distinguish between attitudes and values. Rokeach (1968:159-160) argues that an

attitude may be conceptualized as "an organization of several beliefs focused on a specific object (physical or social, concrete or abstract) or situation." Value, on the other hand, is a "belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is preferable to alternative modes of conduct or end-states of existence. Once a value is internalized it becomes, consciously or unconsciously, a standard or criterion for guiding action, for developing and maintaining attitudes toward relevant objects and situations, for morally judging self and others, and for comparing self with others" (Rokeach, 1968:160). Rokeach points out that his definition is consistent with those of Clyde Kluckholn, Brewster Smith, and Robin Williams and that value once so defined can be seen to differ considerably from attitude.

> While an attitude represents several beliefs focused on a specific object or situation, a value is a single belief that transcendentally guides actions and judgments across specific objects and situations, and beyond immediate goals to more ultimate end-states of existence. Moreover, a value unlike an attitude, is an imperative to action, not only a belief about the preferable but also a preference for the preferable. Finally, a value, unlike an attitude, is a standard or yardstick to guide actions, attitudes, comparisons, evaluations, and justifications of self and others (Rokeach, 1968:160).

One final point should be made concerning values. While we concur with Rokeach that "while an attitude represents <u>several</u> beliefs focused on a specific object or situation, a value is a <u>single</u> belief that transcendentally

guides actions..." etc., we (and undoubtedly Rokeach as well) would not wish inferred from this that values occur in isolation. While values themselves may be single beliefs, our understanding of groups and societies suggests that single values do not exist in isolation but rather occur within total systems. That is, the values within the system tend to be interrelated and often within the system there are sets of values that are mutually supportive. This is not to say that values within the system never conflict, or that there are no internal contradictions, but rather that single values may be placed in the context of the wider whole of which they are a part. The difficulty is that while we sometimes can and do discuss total value systems, it is often necessary to consider value judgments separately, either because we lack the capacity to consider them all at once, or because we consider the probable lack of clarity in doing so imprudent. The point is that even when a value is for one reason or another considered apart from the total system, it is well to recognize that changes in it will likely have implications for changes in other values as well.

We may summarize this discussion of the term "value" as it will be used in this work as follows. A broad definition of the term, argued to be consistent with the usages of philosophers and social scientists, has been offered: "beliefs about classes of objects, situations,

actions, wholes composed of them, as well as classes of properties of objects, situations, actions, and wholes composed of them in regards to the extent that they are good, right, obligatory, or ought to be." It was noted that within the broad working definition several distinguishable categories of value judgments were lumped together. Following Frankena (1973) "judgments of value" were distinguished from "judgments of obligation," and within each category "moral" and "non-moral" sub-categories were distinguished. It was pointed out that since the work is primarily concerned with actions of individual sociologists and of the profession as a whole, its primary focus is questions of what ought to be done, or questions of obligation. However, since the positions to be discussed implicitly hold to a teleological theory of obligation which sees the way we ought to act as tied to the value of the probable consequences of an act, "judgments of value" will be given considerable attention. Further, the use of the noun form "value" was justified (as opposed to restricting the work to the more active "valuing"): values were differentiated from personal preferences, with their social nature stressed, and were differentiated from attitudes; and values were argued to occur within systems rather than in isolation. Having considered the way in which "value" will be used in the work to follow, we may now sketch out the way in which the work is organized.

Chapter II offers what many consider to be the dominant position in sociology - that of "value freedom" or neutrality with respect to all but epistemic or knowledge values. Following the explication of the basic position, closely related positions are also discussed. Chapter III considers the role of non-epistemic values in sociology and attempts to demonstrate that such values are and are likely to continue to be integral parts of the knowledge process and the use of sociological knowledge by sociologists and non-sociologists alike. As a result, it is argued that the position of value neutrality or value freedom is inadequate both descriptively and prescriptively in dealing with these values. Three other positions - "sociology as value full," "the ultimate benefit of sociology," and the "sociological relevance" positions - are found to similarly inadequate in offering a justification for and guiding the numerous choices involved in doing sociology which demand extra-epistemic values. As a result, it is suggested that if such extra-epistemic values are likely to be employed in the decision making process, and if we wish to justify and evaluate resulting decisions as well as to avoid hypocrisy, sociology as a discipline as well as individual sociologists must choose and make explicit a "decision or goal orientation" that will simultaneously serve as a point of reference in decision making at the numerous stages of the knowledge gathering process and at the same time allow evaluation and

justification of those decisions.

Chapters IV and VI examine two alternate possible bases for choosing such a decision or goal orientation. The two possible bases examined are seen to be in disagreement in several important ways. While arguments for each, as well as the ways each would be critical of the other, are presented, no attempt is made to choose between them in that both are argued to be sufficiently reasonable to attract a large number of adherents in subsequent discussion and debate. Further, despite their basic disagreements, each is considered to suggest and support the proposed "optimizing orientation."

More specifically, Chapter IV considers one possible basis for the choice of such a decision or goal orientation. It takes what might be termed a "sceptic's view" concerning the use of facts as an ultimate basis for this choice insofar as the goal orientation has embodied in it some notion of a valued end. In particular, it asserts that the validity of all basic values is ultimately non-demonstrable with reference to facts and that valued ends can have only an assumptive basis. In accord with the sceptic's view and a corollary that values gain no additional validity by virtue of the characteristics of the individuals who possess them, it is argued that sociologists have no warrant for imposing their values upon the population as a whole. If the "sceptic's view" is accepted, the sociologist is thus

placed in the awkward position of having to choose a high level decision orientation while admitting that the value of the orientation is of only assumptive validity.

Chapter V seeks to resolve this dilemma by offering as a decision orientation the "optimization of alternatives for all individuals," which while admittedly assumptive, has as a persuasive reason for its adoption its consonance with the sceptic's view, in that it minimizes the unwarranted imposition of values on others. The chapter offers a basic discussion and explication of the orientation, while additional discussion is reserved for Chapter VII.

Returning to the bases for the choice of a decision or goal orientation, ChapterVI examines an alternative "evolutionary-naturalistic" position which clearly runs counter to and is critical of the sceptic's view concerning facts as a basis for this choice. This position sees the justification of value systems as being strongly tied in an instrumental way to their functioning in promoting human survival and evolutionary development. Thus the basis for choosing a decision orientation is bio-social knowledge and wisdom. After the "evolutionary-naturalistic" view is explained, it is argued that while it is radically different from the sceptic's view, it also suggests the merit of the choice of the "optimization of alternatives for all individuals" as a decision or goal orientation for sociology.

Again, the work does not attempt to argue the preferability of either of the competing bases, but instead suggests that both are worthy of consideration and both support the proposed orientation.

In addition to the basic rationales already offered, ChapterVII offers what are believed to be additional persuasive reasons for adopting the orientation. The orientation is further discussed with special reference to alternative orientations, its relationship to the discipline's epistemic ethic of "truth," and possible limitations and difficulties of the orientation as proposed.

It should be noted that while the proposed orientation is considered by the present author to be the most reasonable and advantageous open to sociology, it is only one alternative. It is presumed that other competing orientations will be advanced with differing rationales. The primary hope is that the orientation and its underlying rationales are explicated with sufficient clarity as to allow both its strengths and weaknesses to readily emerge in an ensuing debate.

In addition to the usual difficulties of untangling the issues, searching for the right words to allow simplification of issues without distorting them, etc., two particular difficulties encountered deserve special mention. First, while a specific gender has usually been avoided when referring to sociologists, our language often forces

the use of gender to avoid the awkwardness of such phrases as "when he or she seeks his or her..." As a result, the convention of referring to sociologists as masculine was followed, and will hopefully be recognized as just that - an unfortunate convention. Perhaps a more serious difficulty is encountered in that in dealing with a topic as basic to the discipline as its values an exceedingly wide range of areas of knowledge and argument are relevant and must be referred to - many of which necessarily fall outside the writer's discipline and specialization. In short, what often here is given brief consideration would be the topic of volumes by those who specialize in those areas. As a result, the necessary breadth of the discussion may demand what may at times seem a cursory or not sufficiently qualified discussion in the eyes of the specialists. It is assumed, however, that such basic and far-ranging discussions are necessary, even if they are inadequate in the eyes of some, and further that such inadequacies will quickly be pointed out and the important debate continued.

# CHAPTER II.

## SOCIOLOGY AS A VALUE FREE OR VALUE NEUTRAL SCIENCE

While within the last decade there has been some shift away from the idea that sociology should be extricated from various value stances, there is little doubt that the value free position has been the dominant one in sociology for the last fifty years. Although the roots of this position could be traced to considerably earlier times, the basis for the value free position is usually considered to be "Science as a Vocation," a speech presented by Max Weber at Munich University in 1918. At that time, Weber was upset by the practices of Privatdozents, who were a rough German equivalent to U.S. graduate assistants, but who were paid no salary other than the lecture fees received from their students. In particular, he saw the Privatdozents propounding religious and political views that were calculated to draw crowds rather than to instruct, and were better suited to political or religious leaders than teachers-scientists (Weber, 1948). Further, Weber lived at a time when more established faculty were using the lecture halls as forums to bolster nationalism, monarchy, and various religious beliefs.

> When Max Weber began to reflect on his academic vocation, he was appalled by the fact that social sciences were dominated by men who saw it as their patriotic duty to defend the cause of the Reich and the Kaiser in their teachings and writings. They oriented their research toward enhancing the fatherland. It is against their prostitution of the scientific calling that Weber directed his shafts (Coser, 1969:134-135).

As a result, Weber strongly argued that the social sciences must be directed toward knowledge rather than toward bolstering one's political position. While in a political forum it is quite proper to offer one's position clearly, and as Weber says use words as "swords against the enemies," as "weapons," it should be remembered that these words are not at that time tools of scientific analysis. "It would be an outrage, however, to use words in such a fashion in a lecture or in the lecture room" (Weber, 1948:145). Just as the teacher should remain a-political, so too should the teacher as scientist, for knowledge is the aim of science (Weber, 1948:139), and "whenever the man of science introduces his personal value judgment, a full understanding of the facts ceases" (Weber, 1948:146). Similarly, men of science must also remain silent on religious issues, and in a sense, science must be "irreligious" (Weber, 1948:142). This stand, put forth by Weber, that social scientists should seek knowledge and avoid personal value judgments, is a germinal statement of the more elaborate and explicit

value neutrality positions that have been put forth by more contemporary sociologists.

This contemporary position of sociology being "value free" or "value neutral" is at bottom quite straightforward and these two terms clearly reflect the nature of the position. Put most simply, it is argued that sociology must deal solely with facts and knowledge, be free of value judgments in its practice, and remain neutral concerning the issue of which values ought to be held. Bierstedt offers one of the clearest statements of the position.

> It [sociology] is a science or it is nothing. And in order to be a science it must diligently avoid all pronouncements of an ethical character. As a science it cannot answer questions of value. It can have no traffic with normative statements because there is no logic of the normative. It can deal, as can the other sciences, only with questions of fact, with propositions, with statements capable of being true or false. It cannot deal with questions of good or bad, better or worse, right or wrong, or any question at all containing the word 'ought.' The sociologist, in company with his brother scientists, has taken seriously the famous remark of Jeremy Bentham, that the word 'ought' ought never to be used, except in saying that it ought never to be used (Bierstedt, 1948:31).

What the value free position presents is the model of the social scientist who deals strictly with the facts, and does not enter into the realm of value judgments. Generally, statements in explication and defense of this position (and discussion of the topic generally) make sweeping generalizations concerning the

place of values in sociology without distinguishing what are two separate questions. One question that may be raised is whether or not values are or ought to be a part of the body of sociological knowledge. A second question which is separable from the first is whether or not values are or ought to be an integral part of the process of seeking knowledge and embedded within the profession's orientation to how the knowledge is to be used. Thus, for example, the value placed upon certain types of knowledge and uses of it need not imply that the body of knowledge is value laden or is value free. The two issues are distinguishable as we can see when we point out that a certain physicist holds strong negative values concerning the manufacture of nuclear weapons without implying that his knowledge of particle physics is faulty or that the knowledge has values embedded within it. Bierstedt and others seem to conflate the two issues when sliding from statements like "scientists cannot answer questions of value" to general prohibitions that sociologists ought never to use the word "ought." This work does not consider the question of whether the body of empirical knowledge has or ought to have value claims embedded within it. Rather, it deals only with the question of the place of values in the process of seeking and employing it.

Coser (1968) suggests that the value free position and the idea that sociologists should not enter into the realm

of value judgments are dominant in sociology. He cites Professor Ralph Thomlinson arguing for the value free science of sociology: "If we want to understand what makes our social world go round, we must study human behavior with the same detachment as the chemist regarding a reaction in the test tube" (in Coser, 1968:108). While he would point out differences between sociology and the natural sciences, Talcott Parsons is also cited by Coser as agreeing with this dominant position in sociology, "when he writes that the basic premise on which sociology rests is value neutrality 'lending clear primacy to the values of the intellectual enterprise as such and refusing to let it be dominated by other values, notably those, on the one hand, of immediate practical interests, on the other hand, those of particular 'world views' at religious or political levels'" (Coser, 1968:109).

Not only do those who are sympathetic to the view of value neutrality assume it to be the dominant position in sociology, so in fact do critics such as Gouldner, even though they consider its attainability to be mythical.

> ...the myth of a value free sociology has been a conquering one. Today, all the powers of sociology, from Parsons to Lundberg, have entered into a tacit alliance to bind us to the dogma that, 'Thou shalt not commit a value judgment,' especially as sociologists. Where is the sociologist, where is the introductory text-book, the lecture on principles, that does not affirm or imply this rule? (Gouldner, 1962:199).

Clearly since Gouldner's writing of this statement in 1962, there has been considerable criticism of the position and it no longer has (if it ever had) the unanimous support that Gouldner suggests. While the majority of sociologists probably still do hold some form of this position, it is unnecessary to argue the proportions. It is sufficient for present purposes to say that the position of value neutrality in sociology continues to be an important one which has a large number of adherents.

Related Positions

In the pure form in which it has been presented, as well as in some of its other formulations, the value free position may seem to suggest that the sociologist have nothing whatsoever to do with values. Consider, for example, the following implications for the practicing sociologist:

> Although all of his evidence indicates that the inequality of the human races is a myth, he would be the first to publish any evidence which would lend scientific support to the biases of a bigot. He does not characterize as evil so fundamental a process as conflict and is not tempted to declare that the abolition of war is a social good. For his is the duty and the responsibility to study social phenomena objectively and without prejudice - without even those prejudices which are on the side of the angels (Bierstedt, 1948:316).

Does this then mean that sociologists must enter into no relations with values in order to legitimately hold a position of value freedom? The several closely

related and often conjoined positions to follow suggest that this is not the case.

Study of Values. While the value neutral position prohibits the employment of personal values in studying social phenomena, or in the use of knowledge produced by that study, this clearly does not prohibit the sociologist from studying the values that people hold. Thus, one can maintain a stance of ethical neutrality while studying the values of any culture, subculture, or aggregate of individuals. The position does not prohibit the sociologist from studying what people say ought to be valued, but does prohibit him from stating whether what people say ought to be valued, ought to be valued.

Role Differentiation. One might well ask then, are there no ends which sociologists value - no social problems that sociologists consider to be more than problems for the discipline of sociology? In short, is the sociologist an amoral person? No it is argued in an accompanying position, one may hold a position of value neutrality for sociology and still remain a moral, ethical, and valuing person. This is argued to be possible through "role differentiation." The argument is that to be a sociologist is just one of many roles that a person plays (or takes) and in that role he acts differently than he would in other roles that he

enters, such as father, committee chairperson, or friend. Similarly, just as is the case for anyone else, he has different expectations placed on him when acting as a sociologist than when taking other roles. While as a sociologist he must remain free of value judgments, there is nothing that prohibits him from expressing, utilizing, or actualizing his values in some other role he might take. For example, the sociologist is free to take value stands in the role of citizen.

> Science and citizenship are two different things. While a given individual may play two different roles, that of scientist and that of citizen, it is of vital importance that he not try to play them both at once and that the two roles be not confused either by the scientist or by the general public (Bierstedt, 1948:313).

Thus, it is argued that one can take a position of sociological value neutrality, and still employ values in other areas of one's life.

Hauser (1969) has recently argued along these lines that while taking a position on social, political, or economic issues would compromise sociologists in their basic tasks of investigation and education, sociologists can appropriately "express their value judgments through many other channels without destroying the image of the craft of sociology, (and) dragging sociology as a profession into the heart of the political arena." Since a sociologist can be a good

scientist even if he is a naive citizen, "to confuse his roles is to gain nothing while risking his potential to be an effective scientist. It is the task of the sociologist to illuminate rather than to exhort, to analyze rather than to prescribe, to delineate problem areas rather than to confront them" (Hauser, 1969:142). What Hauser, and others, "exhort" and "prescribe," is that sociologists do not have to be value free people, but they must segment their lives, and while value judgments can quite rightly enter into other segments of their lives, in that segment called "sociology," they should rigorously be excluded.

Here it is demanded that sociologists should segment their lives into different roles. This segmentation of one's life can be criticized as not allowing sociologists to act as whole persons. Oddly, as Coser points out, it is often those sociologists who explain other areas of social life in terms of role theory, which has a basis in role differentiation, who at the same time deny the possibility of role differentiation for sociologists. Further, he argues against criticisms of segmentation, saying:

> What I have in mind is a tendency in some circles to demand a merging of the role of sociologist with that of citizen; the tendency to assert that anybody who insists on the specificity of the scholar's role is not a full and responsible citizen, or a whole human being. This, I submit, is utter nonsense. I am indeed committed to the

> calling of sociology, but I have never felt that the discipline claimed more from me than segmental participation. Science is not one of those institutions which claim the total man. I can be a devoted sociologist and a socialist, gardner, or what not (Coser, 1969:136).

While there may be disagreement as to the degree to which an individual can actually (successfully) differentiate between the roles he plays, there is no doubt that some degree of differentiation is possible and not necessarily unhealthy.[1]

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[1]This is not to say that role differentiation is always easy or possible for all types of roles. Hauser, who was cited earlier in this section, for example, not only argues for a differentiation between the roles of sociologist and citizen, but also between the roles of sociologist and "social engineer." Thus, while Hauser wishes to prohibit sociologists from making value judgments, he sees no difficulty in their doing so as "social engineers." For example, he himself "was drawn into activities which led directly to significant innovations such as the Social Security system, the Atomic Energy Commission,...the public housing and urban renewal programs," etc. (Hauser, 1969:145). Presumably those who hired him as "social engineer" did so because they viewed him as a sociologist, and not simply as a bright citizen. Further, as "social engineer," he probably did research that might be construed as part of the role of the sociologist. Also, he presumably did not carry a set of signs proclaiming "I am now a sociologist," and "I am now a social engineer," to inform those with whom he interacted of what role he was playing. If the sociologist/citizen dichotomy is a difficult one to maintain, clearly the sociologist/social engineer dichotomy is impossible. Incidently, Hauser offers no warrant for allowing "social engineers" the right to make value judgments while prohibiting sociologists from doing so.

Hypothetical Value Statements. The two positions related to the basic value free stance already suggest two ways that the sociologist can legitmately stand in relation to values. He may study the values of others, or he may express value judgments in some other role such as that of citizen. But the question remains, can the sociologist as sociologist deal with value judgments in any other way besides studying them? Yes, he can deal with value judgments in certain prescribed ways if they are not his own. In a sense, he can say that "if this is the goal or value that you hold, then this is the way that you can actualize it." In Weber's words, "If you take such and such a stand, then, according to scientific experience, you have to use such and such a means in order to carry out your convictions practicably." The sociologist can confront you with the question of whether or not ends are worth the "inevitable means," but he cannot choose between them for you (Weber, 1948:151). (Weber suggests that each end is attainable through only one necessary, "inevitable" means. However, some sociologists who hold this position would be likely to argue that several alternative means can be suggested for a particular end, from which one may choose.) By suggesting the means by which others can actualize their values, the sociologist works with value judgments without contradicting a position of value neutrality, in that

> ...he need have nothing to do with setting the goals themselves;he need, as a scientist, neither praise them as good nor condemn them as bad. It is required of him only to phrase his problem in such a way that he may determine, with the theoretical knowledge and experimental techniques at his command, what is necessary to do in order to achieve the goal (Bierstedt, 1948:317).

In addition to showing the means by which hypothetical goals and values might be achieved, it is suggested that the sociologist can similarly point out the implications of holding certain values. Thus, the sociologist can point out that "if you hold these values, these consequences will follow." Robert Merton argues that this can be a valuable service provided by the sociologist.

> ...not all conditions and processes inimical to the values of men are recognized as such by them. It is the function of the sociologist to report the human consequences of holding to certain values and practices, just as it is his function to discover and report the human consequences of departing from the values and practices (Merton, in Coser, 1968:113).

The value free sociologist then is required to be free of statements concerning the value of ends, or the value of means to ends, but can state, based on his knowledge, the types of social relationships and structures (i.e. means) that <u>could</u> be used to obtain these ends. Similarly, while he is prohibited from making value judgments, he can legitimately point out the behavioral and structural consequences of holding

certain values. Finally, he can also point out other implications, such as conflicts and contradictions that arise in holding certain sets of values.

Knowledge for its own Sake. A position closely related to that of ethical neutrality is the idea that sociological knowledge should be sought for its own sake, or that it is intrinsically valuable. It should be pointed out that while writers often suggest this position in arguing for value neutrality, objectivity, etc., they do not do so exclusively, and at some point in their arguments the position is usually modified to suggest that knowledge will be useful in other ways, and is not merely intrinsically valuable. Merton argues that this conjoining of knowledge as ultimately useful and as intrinsically valuable is an idea that underlies all sciences, not simply the social sciences. He points out that when asked of what use was one of his discoveries, Franklin replied:

> 'What good is a newborn baby?' - a reply echoed by Pasteur and Faraday in the century to come. This attitude expresses a double confidence: that fundamental scientific knowledge is a self-contained good and that, in any case, it will in due course lead to all manner of practical consequences serving the varied interests of men. There is both an intrinsic and ultimate rationale for basic science' (Merton, 1963:86).

The "ultimate benefit" rationale will be covered later, but it is important to remember that in practice it normally is presented in conjunction with the idea

of "knowledge for its own sake." The two are separated here not only for the sake of exposition, but also because they are analytically distinct.

That sociological knowledge is valuable for its own sake is central to the idea of value neutrality in two ways. First, it supports the neutrality position, for it allows the exclusion of all other ends or values toward which sociology might strive. If all other ends or values are excluded, and knowledge was not maintained to be intrinsically of value, it would be impossible to argue that sociology itself is of value and should therefore be supported. The assumption that sociological knowledge is a self-contained good, then, provides a rationale for maintaining that the enterprise can be freed from other values, and still be legitimately pursued. Second, in addition to making the exclusion of other values tenable, the intrinsic value of knowledge further supports ethical neutrality in that ethical neutrality can be argued itself to be of value for it is said to lead to sociological knowledge. Thus, in this sense, value neutrality is of instrumental value leading to the intrinsic good of knowledge, due to the way the knowledge process is conceived and the way values may interfere with that process.

> ...human beings are seen as being essentially passive receptors of the reality experienced through their senses. Knowledge of what we

> consider to be external reality is something that happens to us. It happens best when the only inner desire that motivates our attention is our unfettered curiosity, that is, a concern for knowing reality in terms that are independent of any other concern. Thus we are exhorted to practice what is called 'pure science,' the search for the truth for its own sake, which is regarded as an intrinsically valuable activity. In the context of this search, our voluntary activities must be restricted to actions which allow us to observe phenomena that concern us while interfering with them as little as possible. In other words, we must become passive receptors, doing only whatever is necessary to let reality speak for itself (Biblarz, 1969:2)[2]

Thus, holding the position that knowledge is an intrinsic good supports the value neutral position, as seen in the preceding statement, in that it argues that knowledge is a product of value neutrality, and also in that at the same time it allows sociological knowledge to remain of value while other values are removed.

As pointed out earlier, the position that knowledge ought to be sought for its own sake is seldom offered in pure form - probably because it is difficult to

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[2]This statement by Biblarz is generally a fair representation of the conception of knowledge and its relation to other concerns or values. However, it probably also over-emphasizes passivity in knowledge processes, an over-emphasis which leads to the criticism that knowledge cannot be acquired totally passively. The over-emphasis stems from the failure to distinguish between two types of activity: activity aimed solely at gathering knowledge and activity that is directed toward ends other than knowledge ("action"). Clearly, the operationalist is by definition not passive, yet he is also ideally motivated by "a concern for knowing reality in terms that are independent of any other concerns." Thus, he is only required to be passive in terms of those "other concerns."

present a strong and convincing argument in its favor. When one states that knowledge is sought for its own sake, one is implying that knowledge is of value or is of the highest value. Thus the idea that knowledge is intrinsically valuable may perhaps best be considered an assertion or assumption of value, and although arguments might be presented for it, these arguments are not without logical difficulties.

For example, one might argue that knowledge is intrinsically valuable in that it satisfies some sort of curiosity need. This line of reasoning is of couse self-contradictory in that one cannot posit that the intrinsic value of knowledge is derived from something extrinsic to it, such as a curiosity need. It could be suggested in rebuttal that there is no contradiction in that curiosity is not extrinsic to knowledge, but rather is the root or cause of knowledge and therefore is intrinsic to knowledge - in short, an inherent part of knowledge. Put another way, knowledge is not simply answers: questions are equally an inherent part of knowledge. Thus, curiosity, as the question, is intrinsic to knowledge. However, if this is the case, all that is really argued is that knowledge is intrinsically valuable because part of it is. Or in another form, knowledge is of value because it is of value.

Other similar arguments could be mustered for knowledge for its own sake, such as "it is exciting," or "it makes our lot in life easier to bear if we understand it," or "it makes one a whole person," etc. All such arguments suggest that there are other values that are placed above knowledge, and which knowledge is instrumental in achieving, and thus knowledge is not truly sought for its own sake. In fact, it is some other end which is sought, and the question as to whether it can be attained by knowledge or can better be reached through some other means still remains unanswered.[3]

Ultimately, the idea that sociological knowledge ought to be sought for its own sake is probably best considered an assertion or assumption which is based on the belief that knowledge is intrinsically valuable. It is best considered an assumption for: (1) if one argues that its value is derived from something extrin-

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[3]Other arguments for seeking knowledge for its own sake may include a hidden circularity. Although it is included among other arguments, and not offered precisely for this purpose, an instructive example is suggested by Bendix (1970). It may be abstracted as follows: (1) the academic has a kind of political immunity which allows him to seek knowledge freely in that he has made an implied commitment to remain a-political - that is not to seek knowledge for ends other than for its own sake. (2) If the academic becomes political, that immunity will be lost, and thus others may intervene into the knowledge process and he will not be able to seek knowledge freely. (3) Therefore, knowledge should be sought for its own sake. Probably underlying the argument preceding statement (1) is the implicit statement, "knowledge is intrinsically valuable

sic to it, it is no longer intrinsically valued; and on the other hand, (2) if one argues that it is intrinsically valuable because something intrinsic to it is valuable, then the argument is tautological. However, as suggested earlier, the "knowledge for its own sake" position is important for both understanding and assessing the merits of the value neutral position.

To assess the merits of the value neutral position in sociology, we must ask is sociology really free of values other than the value of knowledge for its own sake, or can it be, or ought it to be? To the extent that sociology is oriented toward values or directed toward ends other than sociological knowledge, we can say that it is not now value free or value neutral. To the same extent that sociology is likely in the future to seek ends other than pure sociological knowledge, it is also likely in the future not to be free of values.

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and ought to be sought for its own sake." Inclusion of such a statement, however, makes this entire argument circular.

# CHAPTER III.

## VALUES IN SOCIOLOGY

It will be argued here that the value free or value neutral position is unacceptable for several reasons. While a strict interpretation of the term "value free" may seem to imply that sociology is or ought to be free of all values, this clearly is not the intent of those who argue for the value free position. Specifically, at any point in time sociology may be conceived of as an imperfect body of knowledge. It is quite consistent with this position to hold or utilize in the practice of sociology either of two types of values: a meta-value of truth-seeking (the perfection of that body of knowledge), or values in seeking knowledge that are dictated by the discipline's conception of truth. Thus, for example, it would seem unfair and/or inaccurate to criticize one who holds a position of value freedom for claiming (1) that he values sociological knowledge, or (2) that he values one method more than another because it seems likely to increase sociological knowledge. It seems equally unreasonable to demand of a sociologist who maintains this position, that he currently be totally free of all extrinsic values, or that he prove that he or the

profession will be free of values, just as it is unreasonable to ask him to prove that the body of sociological knowledge will be perfected. It does, however, seem reasonable to criticize this position if sociology is, and seems likely in all probability to remain, to an important degree not value free.

In particular, it is argued that the body of sociological knowledge is not itself the product of values that are solely intrinsic to that body of knowledge. Rather, it is a product of knowledge processes that are, and with high probability will continue to be, directed by extrinsic values. Second, sociological knowledge is not, and probably will not remain, neutral as to the values which direct its use. In short, knowledge is sought and employed to ends other than pure knowledge. To the extent that these claims are true, sociology is not and is not likely to be value free.[1] It is therefore argued that the value free position, as it is currently expressed, is inadequate as a reflection of current and probable future sociology, and as a way of dealing with extrinsic value

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[1]Although, as Dewey and Humber (1966:647) point out, there is a group of writers who argue that social scientists "...will, inescapably, make such value judgments," here it is argued only that they are likely to do so with high probability, rather than that they must "inescapably" do so. Arguing that sociologists must make value judgments implies that there is something inherent in doing sociology that demands them. Any such argument would

orientations which are likely to continue to exist in sociology.[2]

Extrinsic Values Employed in the Knowledge Process

At numerous points in the knowledge process, the number of alternative ways of seeking knowledge that are open to the sociologist may be in part delimited on the basis of knowledge concerns - the state of the body of sociological knowledge, valued means believed to be likely to lead to knowledge, etc. However, such intrinsic "pure knowledge" values, are usually only capable of partial delimitation of the alternatives available. Choice between the remaining alternatives demands reference to other personally or socially held value judgments which are not implied by pure knowledge concerns.

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probably at best be a tautology, where the necessity of value judgments is derived from the chosen definition of sociology. Thus, we settle for attempting to demonstrate that there is a high degree of probability that value judgments will be employed in sociology. Just as it was conceded that it seems unreasonable to demand that it be demonstrated that sociology can be completely freed of values, it seems equally unreasonable to demand proof that sociology must inescapably (always) employ value judgments.

[2]Most simply, the position to be presented is that although it is conceivable that the employment of non-epistemic values in sociology will cease at some future date, this seems unlikely and therefore these values must be dealt with. The nature of the argument can be made clear in an analogy to sexual relations. While it is conceivable that at some future time everyone will decide not to indulge in sex, it seems highly unlikely. Given the existence of sexual relations now, and their high probability in the future, a prescription not to engage in sexual relations would not only inadequately reflect present and future behavior, but would also be of little use in deciding what are the best means of sexual expression.

For example, one must choose a general problem area from the extremely large number of problems encompassed within the boundaries of sociology. The body of sociological theory, as well as the available data, both suggest and limit the possible number of problem areas that ought to be investigated, such as the nature of conflict, problems of social structure and social process, the problem of how social order is possible, etc. Yet as even a sociologist who defends the value neutral position suggest, knowledge concerns do not fully delimit the alternatives, and "... of those that are susceptible to scientific explanation, it is a matter of nonscientific decision that some ought to be investigated first and others at a later and more propitious time" (Bierstedt, 1948:318). Other value judgments must be employed, for at a given point in time many issues will be viewed by the individual sociologist or the profession as being of equal theoretical importance. Also, it is no simple matter to determine the relative importance of the alternative problem areas to the body of knowledge as a whole, and as a result, the choice between them is more a function of other values than of careful weighing of their import to, and impact on, the knowledge system.

Similarly, once a problem is chosen it may be translated into an extremely wide number of substantive areas, and these alternatives are only partially delimited

by methodological concerns and theoretic applicability. Choosing to seek knowledge in the area of race relations rather than sex roles, creativity rather than conformity, the sociology or religion rather than the sociology of work, or any choice between such disparate areas as social stratification, the family, the sociology of war, and criminology, demands value judgments that are not implied by pure knowledge concerns.

Which general method or particular technique is chosen in seeking sociological knowledge is also only partly directed by pure knowledge concerns, such as the ability of the sociologist to meet the assumptions of the method or the extent to which the method is believed to be likely to lead to truth. Again, several options may be scientifically satisfactory, and the choice between them must be made on the basis of other values. Often which method is chosen is due to extrinsic concerns such as the use to which the knowledge will likely be put. Thus, while theoretical concerns may be satisfied by a fairly low degree of generalizability possessed by numerous methods, one method offering greater generalizability may be chosen if applicability (usefulness of findings) is a major concern. Similarly, a more stringent "level of significance" may be chosen than is demanded for simple theory testing if confidence in the findings is important for extra-theoretical reasons (as is the case

in testing drugs). In fact, not only are extrinsic values often necessary in the choice of methods and techniques, they are often given priority over pure knowledge values. Consider this statement by Gray, offered in another connection:

> But one should note that German physicians who systematically froze human beings in tubs of ice, and, in the conduct of sterilization experiments, sent electrical charges through female ovaries were quite useful to the Nazi regime. While some of these examples might seem extreme, one must recognize nonetheless that the behavior of these German scientists falls quite within the limits of the value free model offered (Gray, 1968:179).

While Gray is quite correct in pointing out that the value free position must remain silent concerning such methods of gaining knowledge, it is equally instructive to remember that the vast majority of sociologists would not perform similar research even if their societies allowed them to. Also, while it has been suggested that a difficulty for sociology is the inability to conduct many societal level experiments that would provide important tests, because they are prohibited by society (Nagel, 1961:450-451), many sociologists would not perform many of these tests due to their value commitments, even if they were permitted to do so by society. Thus, on many occasions the method most clearly suggested by pure knowledge concerns would be ruled out by other value judgments made by

the sociologist. In the case of the choice of methods, then, the sociologist is not only not value neutral, but certain value judgments are given precedence over knowledge concerns. If this were not the case, any method of seeking knowledge would be preferred to foregoing that knowledge, even if a particular method entailed death, suffering, or the violation of some other deeply held value.

At a more general level, the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association suggests that many extra-epistemic values are given precedence over knowledge concerns. Some values that are stated or implied in the Code are that the sociologist should: (1) respect the right of privacy of subjects, (2) respect the right of confidentiality of subjects, (3) avoid personal harm to subjects, and (4) avoid misinterpretation of his abilities (abstracted from Dorn and Long, 1974:33). If ethical prescriptions such as these are taken seriously, presumably one would not violate them even if a loss of knowledge were the cost. For example, sociologists should "refuse to accept grants or contracts if such an acceptance would mean violation of ethical principles" (in Dorn and Long, 1974:33). It would seem that such ethical principles are given precedence over knowledge - certainly they are given a co-equal status with epistemic values.

Extra-epistemic values also come into play in terms of the choices as to how to disseminate the knowledge obtained. It may be argued that the future growth of the body of knowledge itself dictates that the knowledge obtained be published in certain sociological journals and not in others, in that their readerships are most likely to elaborate and extend this knowledge. However, the choice must at least be made whether or not to disseminate the information and theory to a wider audience. Whether parts of that body of knowledge should be popularized and presented to the general public is not a choice that can be made without reference to values that lie outside that body. Clearly, the decision to insure that one particular group, such as the military, a governmental body, or persons on welfare, is given access to sociological information, also demands reference to extra-epistemic values. Further, even the decision of whether or not to disseminate research findings within the discipline (consider the Jensen (1969) study on black IQ) may have to be made in light of whether presumed outcomes of the findings, should they become generally known outside the discipline, were valued. In short, there are many choices that must be made concerning dissemination of the body of knowledge, which the body of knowledge cannot dictate.

At the most general level, it may be argued that the epistemological process within sociology demands that non-epistemic values are and will be included if knowledge is to be efficiently and effectively sought. First, it has been argued forcefully (primarily by those of a phenomenological and ethnomethodological bent) that gaining valid sociological knowledge of all kinds, and in particular gaining knowledge of experience, demands subjective involvement with those studied. The subjective involvement which would allow an "inside track" to knowledge demands that the sociologist adopt and share the meanings, interests, and values of the studied group. According to this view, then, the sociologist will have to adopt a set of values in the pursuit of knowledge, and it seems likely that a large number of sociologists will continue to do this. (While a large number of sociologists could be cited in this connection, a clear presentation of the arguments is found in Phillips, 1971, particularly pp. 124-160). Second, while Biblarz was cited in Chapter II as pointing out that the "value free" position rests on a conception of the knowledge process which is passive, he also points out that there exists an alternative more active view of how the knowledge process operated.

> This alternative view sees humans as entities which exist in an environment with which they continuously interact, so that they are never passive receptors of experience. Reality is

> discovered in the context of acting within it for human (that is, value laden) purposes and human beings learn about the world by changing it or failing to change it; in the process they also change themselves (Biblarz, 1969:3).

This view of the epistemological process does not seem unreasonable, and as a result sociologists are likely to recognize that sociological knowledge is not the result of simple passive receptivity, but of sociological action. If knowledge continues to be sought by means of action, that is, behavior that is directed by values and value actualization, extra-epistemic values are likely to play a very significant role in the knowledge process.

To briefly summarize, at innumerable points in the knowledge process in which decisions must be made, extra-epistemic value judgments must be relied upon in making the final decision. It could be argued that many of these decisions are not based so much on beliefs as to what ought to be done, or is right, or is good, but rather are made on the basis of other factors such as simple personal preference, habit, paths of least resistance, or conformity to social convention. Thus for example, the choice of an individual sociologist to disseminate knowledge through a particular journal may be due to previous success in getting articles published, the journal's prestige, and the fact that respected colleagues have published there. While it may be admitted that factors such as these which we may not call strictly value judgments may often enter into individual

decision making, and even may be totally responsible for the decision made, such an admission does not seriously weaken the line of reasoning as a whole. First, while such factors may be seen as playing a role in many of these personal decisions, higher level value questions also usually play a major role in legitimating these factors (for example the question of the value of the social conventions, or his or her preferences). Second, while value judgments may not be made every time a decision is made, at some point basic questions such as the value of disseminating information to a wider public or merely to other professionals must be addressed in terms of the value of the general activity. Third, such decision making within major areas of choice does not take place solely, or perhaps even primarily, at the level of the individual, but rather at the level of the profession as a whole and major sub-groups within it. Such decision making usually demands evaluation that cannot be said to be a summation of mere personal preferences but takes into account what future professional directions are to be valued. Even professional conventions do not remain eternally unchallenged, but are from time to time evaluated and as a result justified and strengthened or found unjustified and modified or rejected. The point is that while the extra-epistemic decisions at numerous points in the knowledge process may be agreed to include factors and criteria which are not strictly evaluative,

reference to values plays a highly significant role and seems likely to continue to do so.

Further, while various parts of the knowledge process have been treated separately for the sake of exposition, it should be noted that of course the parts of the knowledge process are interdependent, and choices made on the basis of value judgments will be reflected in other parts of the knowledge process as well. Since the value free position must necessarily remain silent regarding the choice of extra-epistemic values, it is useless in aiding and evaluating the choices that demand such values. It is similarly untenable in terms of the uses of sociological knowledge, once obtained.

Values and the Use of Sociological Knowledge

As the body of sociological knowledge becomes increasingly refined, the possibilities for use of that body also increase. To the extent that this body of knowledge is used or applied, choices are made which involve extra-epistemic values. It is argued here, in similar fashion to the preceding section on the processes of seeking knowledge, that sociological knowledge is, and will likely continue to be, used to an important degree; as a result, the value neutrality position is neither reflective of, not adequate for dealing with, the situation.

Necessary to the application of sociological knowledge is the ability to control. Again, in order to accurately represent the value neutral position, we must make at least one general distinction between the two major senses in which the term "control" is used. The first sense is that which we normally meet in introductory textbooks describing the goals of science as "explanation, prediction, and control." In this sense the ability to control phenomena is sought not for its own sake but for the sake of testing the accuracy of a theory or explanation. To the extent that one is able to manipulate phenomena in a manner implied by the theory, it can be said that one's explanation probably has some validity. If a sociologist seeks the ability to control solely as a means of testing his knowledge, we can say that his actions are dictated by epistemic concerns and that he has not himself violated the value free stance.

However, if the sociologist seeks to control phenomena for some other end than the test of theory, we can say that he is no longer following the dictates of value neutrality. In this second sense, then, the term "control" refers to manipulation of a phenomenon either by changing it from its present state or allowing the continuance of its present state, in light of some other valued end.[3]

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[3]The term "control" will henceforth be used in this second, non-epistemic sense, unless clearly specified.

Of course, the two types of control are not unrelated. As control as a test of explanation improves, so does the possibility of using knowledge in other ways not dictated by knowledge values. In short, control can be more readily employed to achieve other ends.

It is perhaps for this reason, coupled with the recognition of the growth of the body of sociological knowledge, that concern has been expressed (as we shall see on the following pages) over current and future misuse of sociological knowledge and its resulting control capabilities. Although there is considerable disagreement as to what constitutes misuse, there certainly seems to be a unifying concern about the ends to which sociological knowledge is put.

It is not argued here that knowledge will likely be misused, for what constitutes misuse depends upon the orientation employed to evaluate the various uses. It is simply argued that sociological knowledge is likely to be used, and that the decisions as to whether or not to use sociological knowledge at any particular time, and to employ it one way and not another, imply value choices - even if those values choices are not made explicit,

Before proceding, it should be pointed out that one may feel that any concern over the use of sociological knowledge may be premature or exaggerated in that the body of knowledge has not arrived at sufficient maturity to allow any significant degree of control. Raymond

Bauer argues along these lines with reference to discussions of social responsibility within psychology, claiming that members of that discipline overstate their actual or potential power to manipulate human behavior (1965). Citing such examples of overstatement in discussions of brainwashing and Vance Packard's Hidden Persuaders (1957), Bauer argues that while there are dangers of abuse of psychological knowledge, these should not be overstated and unrealistic dangers imagined.[4] As a result, psychologists should be "responsibly responsible" rather than"pseudo-responsible" - that is, discussions should deal with realistic rather than fanciful dangers (Bauer, 1965). Similarly, discussions of the potential misuses of sociological knowledge may be overstated as they have been in psychology. Although one might contend that in the case of both disciplines there is little danger of being overcautious, Bauer counters that there are several ill-effects of such discussions.

> The furor over 'hidden pursuasion' created a market for a considerable amount of bad research... The result of this, in turn, was to create disillusion and confusion in the ranks of laymen who had contact with this research. Visions

[4] Bauer suggests an interesting - if undocumented - explanation of the motivation of these discussions; "The only interpretation that I can put on the preference for the discussion of fanciful over realistic dangers is that they must serve some special need which, in turn, I infer to be enhancement of our egos as psychologists via an image of political omnipotence" (1965:51).

> of the use of the social sciences for totalitarian control have caused us difficulties in the halls of Congress. Perhaps more serious and general is the impact of such discussions on reinforcement of the public image of psychologists as dangerous and untrustworthy (Bauer, 1965:51).

Just as Bauer claims that the discussion of the misuses of psychological knowledge are overstated, so too it can be claimed that Bauer overstates the ill-effects of these discussions "in the halls of Congress" and elsewhere. While there is a danger of creating unfounded fear or hope through overstatement, sociological and psychological knowledge is, and will in all probability continue to be, used. Sociological control capabilities, while clearly not Orwellian in nature, and while in infancy compared to those of the natural sciences, will be refined and should be recognized. Further, even given that current control capabilities are comparatively limited in all the social sciences.

> ...the issue of the control of behavior must be put into a broader time perspective... If we put our research efforts in the longer context of the age of the earth, the age of man, the age of psychology as a science, then it would seem clear that the scientific information required for effective behavior control will probably be a reality in a relatively short period of time, be it 10, 20, or 100 years (Krasner, 1965:12).

Still further, even if the time span for "effective" behavioral control in deemed distant, sociological knowledge may now be used for extra-epistemic ends even if that knowledge is highly imperfect, and its resulting effectiveness highly limited.

Sociological knowledge, then, has some limited capacity for use currently, and more effective capabilities may be presumed to exist in the future. In addition, there has existed a certain degree of legitimacy in sociology both for seeking "useful" knowledge, and for sociologists directly employing that knowledge themselves. This idea that it is legitimate to employ sociological knowledge for extra-epistemic ends, while hotly contested, does suggest that a number of sociologists would have been willing to use sociological knowledge if given the opportunity.

In fact, the idea of putting sociological knowledge to use is not a recent one: it has been argued that the early sociologists sought sociological knowledge in order to use it for what they considered to be the betterment of society. Braude views the history of sociology in this way: "...sociology was born out of the desire to protest as well as discover. The Wards, the Simmels, the Parks, and even the Webers, could not see knowledge apart from action; the vita contemplativa was coterminous with the vita activa" (Braude, 1964:397). Many sociologists of the succeeding generation also saw sociology as producing usable knowledge, saw sociologists as social engineers, and founded such journals as Social Hygiene (1916), in which sociological knowledge was applied to issues of "social health and morality."

More recently, in theforties, Lynd in his now famous book Knowledge for What (1948), renewed the call for sociological knowledge to be used directly to deal with social ills. Lundberg (1947), while considerably more positivistic than Lynd, and differing in other significant ways, also urged in Can Science Save Us? sociology to be applied to solving social problems. Even Bierstedt, after arguing strongly for the value free and role differentiation positions presented earlier, surprisingly concludes that sociology should be used for extra-epistemic purposes:

> Finally, it is time for the scientist to acknowledge that the ultimate test of his activity lies in the social use and consequence of his conclusions. Whatever freedom the sociologist may achieve from the exigencies of time and circumstance, it is still important, and now more than ever before, to narrow the gap between the discovery of new principles and their application to the sphere of human relations. Society should not be the victim of a cultural lag between sociological knowledge and social use. No scientific scruples, therefore, as important as those scruples are should delay a constantly increasing sensitivity to the social role of social science (Bierstedt, 1948:318).

The calls for sociological knowledge to be used, or to be developed that it may be put to use, are still heard, and are likely to continue. Tarter (1973), for example,calls for increasing interest and work in the area of developing social technologies, and for sociologists to become social technologists. The goal is a

planned society, with behavior changes in "desired" directions. Unfortunately, Tarter, like most of his predecessors, neglects to inform his readers as to what ends the society is planned for, or what the desired directions of social changes might be. He nonetheless proudly proclaims that "...not only will the social technologist be part experimental psychologist, he will also be part architect. Techniques of social intervention will be aimed primarily at direct management of environmental dimensions of human existence" (Tarter, 1973:57).

Articles and books, such as those mentioned, proclaiming that sociological knowledge ought to be sought for its usefulness, and then employed, may no longer be necessary. Sociological knowledge is already being sought for use and used both by (1) sociologists themselves, and (2) others outside of sociology.

The fact that sociologists are seeking employable knowledge, and using their techniques for a wide variety of purposes, is being increasingly recognized. It is not surprising that those who are most vocal and insistent in their recognition of the extent to which sociologists are employing knowledge for non-epistemic ends, are those who are critical of the values that direct its use. Thus Birnbaum points out that the primary political criticism of sociology comes from the left, and that this position is clear:

> Sociology in its present form has irreducible ideological components...These ideological components are closely related to political elements: sociologists have become ancillary agents of power, by performing intelligence service for purposes of domination, exploitation, and manipulation (Birnbaum, 1971:734).

Thus, sociologists are seen as using techniques for gathering information in the service of elites. The thrust of this attack from the left is that sociologists are seeking knowledge which can be used in direct maintenance of the established order by providing information to agencies and corporations for whom they are employed, act as consultants, or do solicited research.

> Henceforth the inspiration of sociology will always be more responsive to the social demand for a nationalist practice to serve bourgeois ends: money, profit, and the maintenance of order.
>
> Evidence abounds. Industrial sociology seeks above all the adjustment of the worker to his job. The possibility of any other approach is limited, since the sociologist who receives a salary from management must respect the goal of the economic system: to produce as much as possible in order to make as much money as possible (Cohn-Bendit et al, 1968:544).

Cohn-Bendit et al (1968:544) offer other evidence of sociologists seeking knowledge, which they view as aimed at serving bourgeois and nationalist ends, such as propaganda research in political sociology, Stouffer's American Soldier, and research for the

advertising industry.

Regardless of whether one agrees as to the values that orient the use for which sociological knowledge is being sought, it does indeed seem often to be sought for specific application. While directly applicable knowledge probably is sought to an even greater extent in the natural sciences, the sciences in general have emphasized applied over basic research. Bendix (1970:840) reports that in the United States in 1966, 3.2 billion dollars were spent on basic research while 18.9 billion were spent for applied research and development. Presumably, sociology in the future, after a sufficient expansion of the basic knowledge base, will approximate the proportion of applied to basic research in the natural sciences.[5] There seems even now to be an increase in the number of research grants that are requested or solicited by granting agencies (as opposed to those submitted, unsolicited, by sociologists); this suggests, if the trend continues, that knowledge will increasingly be sought to serve values besides the epistemic ones of the researcher-sociologist.

To return to the critique from the left, it is

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[5]Of course this does not mean that basic knowledge cannot be sought when doing applied research, but it does mean that applicability criteria must be satisfied for a project to be funded as "applied."

argued that sociologists do not merely seek knowledge that is useful, but that they seek knowledge that is specifically useful to the establishment. This, it is claimed, is due to the fact that either sociologists agree with establishment values, or, more benignly, the knowledge process has financial costs that can only be satisfied by the establishment.

> The profession as a whole is primarily geared to the service of existing power. Most sociologists have learned to do research that depends on the availability of relatively large sums of money, and it is obvious that these sums cannot come from the poor (Biblarz, 1969:4).

In addition to seeking knowledge that is useful to those in power, sociologists are charged by the critics with actively engaging in using that knowledge themselves. As openings for sociologists increase in agencies, industry, and research organizations that deal with social planning, sociologists are actively employing sociological knowledge more extensively than before. Thus, Gray (1968:180) argues that sociologists who profess value freedom have really become "...professional hand maidens of the going value system...No longer truly intellectual, they have assumed a new role as employees, consultants, or technicians serving the present establishment." As a result, Gray suggests remedial action in terms of the sociologist suggesting policy.[6]

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[6]Oddly, in attempting to show that one can make value

Put most simply, critics see sociologists in their employment of sociological knowledge as intellectual policemen. This description may perhaps be applied most tellingly to those involved in evaluation research, where the primary goal is the determination of the effectiveness of some social program in reaching some goals set by those who establish it in reference to some target population. Caro, who is sympathetic to evaluation research, recognizes this characterization, but points out that evaluation researchers themselves consider it to be inaccurate.

> Where action programs are carried out by a formal organization, evaluative research is most commonly sponsored by external funding sources and/or top administrators...Those who actually carry out programs to be evaluated tend to be subordinate to those to whom evaluative researchers report. Although this structural arrangement put the evaluation researcher in the same organizational position as an inspector or a policeman, evaluative researchers insist their role is quite different. Thus Likert and Lippit emphasize '...that the objective of the research is to discover the

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judgments and remain scholarly, Gray (1968:180) suggests the following, apparently as a legitimate way in which to employ values in guiding social policy:

> Likewise, if the social scientist sees in his data an impending racial crisis is he (or his data? or sociology? or science?) in any way compromised should he attempt to convince the city authorities to take certain measures for the good of all urban residents concerned? Obviously not. To be responsible has always been a virtue!"

Undoubtedly, some black radicals would not consider this stance too far removed from being a "professional hand maiden of the going value system!"

> relative effectiveness of different methods and principles and that the study is in no way an attempt to perform a policing function. The emphasis must be on discovering what principles work best and why, and not on finding and reporting which individuals are doing their jobs well or poorly...' (Caro, 1969:88).

Despite emphasis in the research being placed on principles, the principles that work and those who act upon them or actualize them are not readily separable. At some point, responsibility for the failure or success must be laid primarily on either the principles or the individuals, and thus the individuals must be evaluated at some point.

More importantly, this whole argument misses the point as to who is being policed. The really problematic policing occurs in terms of the action program's target population. "Discovering what principles work best and why," means what works best to change the behavior of the target population in ways desired by external funding sources, or works best to maintain the behavior of the target population within certain parameters deemed tolerable by those sources. Being a "policeman" in this sense is not necessarily undesirable. Whether it is or not depends upon the extent to which one values the values which the action program represents.

In fact, sociologists are increasingly entering into professions involving evaluation research and other

functions which are not purely epistemic, precisely because they share the values of the action programs. Thus, a review of the literature finds that one of the two major reasons (the other being that theoretically important hypotheses can often be tested) emphasized by social scientists for doing evaluative research is that

> ...The social action goals of some social scientists parallel those of their clients; and their belief in the potential contribution of scientific evaluation to the development of effective programs leads to involvement (Caro, 1969:89).

For example, many such researchers express an interest in such target populations as the aged, the mentally ill, alcholoics, etc.[7]

It should be pointed out that persons employing sociological knowledge do not always do so in the most commonly expected ways. For example, while evaluation researchers are often accused of maintaining the status quo, they are often desirous of change and perform their research to that end.

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7It may be interesting to note the reason suggested in the literature as to why administrators of action programs wish evaluative research done. Stated reasons offered: (1) introducing greater rationality into the decision-making process, (2) feedback to other administrators for program refinement, (3) dissemination of program information to the public, and (4) providing accounting information to funding agencies. Covert reasons: (1) aid in settling an internal dispute, (2) justification of previous decisions, (3) support of an attempt to gain power, (4) justification of postponement of action (5) allowing responsibility for decisions to be placed outside the organization, and (6) lending an aura of prestige

> Researchers often have a vested interest in discovering inefficiency and encouraging change...In part, the social scientists justify their claim to superior knowledge of human affairs by dramatizing inadequacies in conventional wisdom and existing programs... Evaluating scientists are thus predisposed to see the need for change... (Caro, 1960:89).[8]

Similarly unexpected is that fact that many self-proclaimed radicals have recently attempted to carry out research in order to make changes "within the system" (see Colfax, 1970:82), and have taken positions within established systems in order to modify them in ways that are more in keeping with their own values.

In short, sociologists are both seeking knowledge and actively applying it in order to actualize a wide range of values. The fact that there is such wide disagreement about the values that guide the use of sociological knowledge, suggests more strongly that non-epistemic values are guiding its use. These non-epistemic uses of sociological knowledge by sociologists seem likely to continue. There is no reason to assume that sociologists will not see problems in their various societies to which their knowledge can be applied. Further, as laymen increasingly recognize sociological knowledge and sociological expertise as potentially useful, they will increasingly put pressure on sociologists to actively employ their knowledge. At present,

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to the program (abstracted from Caro, 1969:89).

[8]It is duly noted that many critics on the left would consider this type of change that is valued, to be insignificant or reactionary, yet even this type of change is seldom recognized nonetheless.

while the results of attempted use of social scientific knowledge is sometimes disappointing, "a report of the National Science Foundation acknowledges that social scientists are being called upon at unprecedented rates to provide solutions to pressing national and local problems..." (Tarter, 1971:154).

As long as sociologists continue to use their knowledge, they will do so according to a set of values, and thus, as description, the value free position is inaccurate. Further, as long as sociologists continue to use their knowledge, the value free position is prescriptively of little value, in that it must remain silent concerning the crucial question of which values should be actualized.

Use of Sociological Knowledge by Non-Sociologists

It may be asked, however: What if sociologists in the future (1) completely ceased seeking knowledge for reasons other than for its own sake, and (2) consistently refused to use this knowledge? In other words, if sociologists only sought basic knowledge with no thought of application, would not then sociology be value free? Even if we grant for the moment this possibility, which seems extremely unlikely given the preceding discussion, all that would be granted is that sociologists had become free of values, and not necessarily sociology. Sociology is not simply those

who practice it, it is also a body of knowledge. Even given that sociologists decided against using this knowledge for valued ends, the question still remains as to whether it will be used by others - in short, whether it will remain free of value employment.

Let us assume then that the body of sociological knowledge that has been produced by sociologists is neutral with respect to values. Being neutral, it would not preclude use of that knowledge in the actualization of widely divergent and often contradictory values. Also, regardless of the nature of their values, that knowledge can be employed by anyone who (1) is aware of the potential usefulness of the knowledge in acheiving their ends, and (2) has access to the resources required for its implementation.

> ...The sciences are neutral in terms of theoretical knowledge but are not neutral in the consequences resulting from the practical application of that knowledge which could be manipulated for positive and constructive or negative and destructive ends. As Bertrand Russell made clear: 'Science in so far as it consists of knowledge, must be regarded as having value, but in so far as it consists of techniques the question whether it is to be praised or blamed depends upon the use that is made of the technique' (Vrga, 1971:247).

Thus, ideally, the value free sociologist produces knowledge that can be used by anyone in the service of any valued ends. The implications of this aspect of the value free position are suggested by Gray:

> should the full impact of Lundberg's observation that physical scientists are not as severely disturbed by political upheaval not be appreciated, he stated more precisely the virtue of his position for one concerned with the survival or success of his individual career: 'The service of <u>real</u> (i.e. value free)[9] social scientists would be indispensible to Fascists or Communists or Democrats, just as are the services of physicists and physicians' (Gray, 1968:179).

In this situation, the body of sociological knowledge is analogous to the body of a whore or a gigolo - used by anyone and in a wide variety of ways. The analogy breaks down in that the sociologist producing the knowledge would ideally not be directly compensated financially for services rendered. Not only <u>can</u> the body of sociological knowledge be used, even if not by sociologists, but there is also an extremely high probability that it <u>will</u> be used. As various segments of society recognize its potential usefulness in attaining their various ends, it will increasingly be used. Its use would increase still further as that body of knowledge is refined, and instances of successful employment are recognized and become more plentiful. There seems little reason to think that the world has become or will become in the near future a less problematic place in which to live than it was in 1948:

> Insistent public dilemmas clamor for solution. Decisions will be made and public policies established - because no delaying or turning

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9The convention used throughout is that "[ ]" are placed by the present author, while "( )" occur in the original.

> back is possible in this hurrying climactic era. If the social scientist is too bent on 'waiting until all the data are in,' or if university policies warn him off controversial issues, the decisions will be made anyway - without him. They will be made by the 'practical' man and by the 'hard headed politician' chivvied[10] by interest and pressure blocks (Lynd, 1948:9).

Thus, even if sociologists free themselves of values in terms of using sociology, it does not seem likely that sociological knowledge will be freed from value employment.[11] Sociological knowledge, and thus sociology, are not freed from an intimate connection with values. Yet the question still remains, do sociologists share in any responsibility for the use

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[10] Chivvied?!

[11] Not only will sociological knowledge be used in accordance with values, it will also probably be used to change the values of others. This is often the case in "mission" oriented programs (i.e. poverty, mental health, etc.) where the necessary first step is to change the values of the target population so as to correspond to those of the persons running the program. Andrews (1967:3) puts it this way:

> This problem non-shared goals in a program is expressed, in the statements that 'middle class values' of the programmers are not necessarily held by those for whom the project is provided. In that instance the manipulator has to intervene in the value constellation of the population prior to other attempts to change the condition of that population. In some sense this interplay of values is involved in most applied programs designed to alleviate social problems and the individuals served by the program are under constant pressure to adopt the goals of the practioners.

of the knowledge they produce? It is argued here that they do because they produce it (unless they do so under duress), just as the weapons manufacturer incurs an indirect responsibility when his weapons are used. Further, "scientific research is expensive and society must divert resources from other needs to support it. By accepting support, the sociologist incurs an obligation to reciprocate" (Kulgen, 1970:186). The nature of this obligation is open to question, but clearly sociologists have some responsibility to the society that supports the research which yields knowledge. The sociologist at minimum has a responsibility not to remain silent concerning the values that guide the use of sociological knowledge.

Thus, the minimum one could suggest is that the sociologist has the responsibility, even if he is able himself to avoid the use of knowledge, to act as "watchdog" concerning its use by others. In an editorial in Science, Abelson argues for this role.

> Others have pointed out that once facts have become generally known, the scientist can no longer determine how his discoveries may be applied. To some degree this argument is valid. Nevertheless, scientists will have continuing and important roles in determining how science is applied. One important function is that of watchdog.
>
> In exploiting scientific discoveries, humanity will squander resources and unwittingly conduct profoundly important experiments on

> itself and its environment. Who will evaluate such experiments and be alert to emerging problems? The man on the street can scarcely fill such a role. Government might, but its leadership is in the hands of the politicians who rarely act until an issue is crystallized by others. Scientists or engineers in government service might act as watchdogs, but in general, politicians prefer that bureaucrats speak only when spoken to. Employees in industry are in much the same circumstance. Thus, academic scientists and scientific societies have responsibilities that they cannot escape (Abelson, 1970:241).

But even to provide this minimum role of watchdog, the individual scientist or scientific society needs a set of values or an overriding decision or goal orientation in order to decide when to bark and when to remain silent. It is difficult to be an effective watchdog without knowing what one is watching for. And the value neutral position by definition cannot help us with this problem of selecting the requisite value orientation.

This has hopefully become clear in the preceding pages: sociology is, and in all probability will continue to be, highly involved with extra-epistemic values. While we may disagree with Warren Bennis concerning the lack of literature in this area, we may nonetheless agree with his final conclusion: "The social scientist's own value system [is] a topic, it hardly needs saying, that we pay scant attention to, except for some rather bored and pious statements about how value free we are, a statement that seems more empirically free than anything else..." (1968:242).

It has hopefully been shown that (1) at numerous points

in the knowledge process choices are necessary which often seem to demand extra-epistemic values. Further, (2) sociologists are increasingly using knowledge and directly seeking knowledge so that it might be used, and this seems likely to continue in the future: this again involves extra-epistemic value choices. Further, (3) even if sociologists somehow managed not to employ sociological knowledge, that knowledge will be used by others in accordance with their values.[12] Actually both sociologists and non-sociologists will probably employ this knowledge. As Kenneth Benne suggests, this is the case for all the sciences.

> Whether we have achieved formats, methods, and value orientations for an adequate integration of scientific and non-scientific resources is problematic. That the desegregation of scientific and non-scientific personnel has been widely and unevenly achieved, is a fact (Benne, 1965:6).

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[12]We might even go further in this argument, contending that even if sociologists did not employ sociological knowledge for certain ends, and even if others did not directly employ that knowledge, sociology still would not be freed of the necessity of choosing value orientations. This is because the process of seeking knowledge often creates changes in the phenomena studied (even if these changes are not sought) which may or may not be valued. Even in the physical sciences - usually offered as the models of detachment - the idea that the scientist is merely an observer has had to be abandoned.

> Increasingly, the scientist creates the universe which he studies. Physicists are producing particles unknown in nature. Chemists have produced elements unknown in nature and innumerable new compounds. The biologist produces new hybrids, new genetic arrangements, and may shortly begin to intervene in genetic evolution on a massive

Thus, the real question confronting sociology is not whether to include an extra-epistemic value orientation, but which extra-epistemic value orientation should be chosen.

One who holds doggedly to the value free position may still wish to argue that we need not consider which extra-epistemic value orientation should be chosen, despite the evidence presented in the preceding pages. It is contended here that individual sociologists as well as the discipline as a whole must choose and make explicit such a guiding extra-epistemic value orientation, even though it has not been argued that sociologists must necessarily (always) employ extra-epistemic values.

If it had been argued that there is something inherent in doing sociology that makes value employment an unavoidable necessity, it would be considerably easier to demonstrate the need to choose an overriding value orientation to guide

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scale. Our knowledge of ecology is likely to change the whole ecological system of the earth.

> Social sciences are dominated by the fact that the social scientist and the knowledge he creates are themselves integral parts of the system which is being studied. Hence, the system changes as it is studied and because it is studied (Boulding, 1967:12).

While all such changes are not foreseeable nor significant, many are, and the question remains as to their value. Further, responsibility for these changes can only be placed with the scientist who produces them.

such necessary value employment. Not arguing for the necessity of extra-epistemic values makes it much more difficult to rule out a position of value neutrality as sufficient by itself to act as a guide for the discipline. Although it would make the current task of demonstrating the need for an extra-epistemic value orientation more comfortable, at the beginning of this Chapter (see especially pp. 40-41 and footnotes 1 and 2), it was stated that for numerous reasons it would not be argued here that sociologists will inescapably make value judgments. Rather, the "weaker" but more realistically demonstrable position has been taken that sociology is, and seems likely in all probability to remain, to an important degree not value free. Specifically, sociologists do now, and probably will continue to, employ extra-epistemic values to a significant degree in guiding and justifying the numerous decisions involved in (a) seeking knowledge, and (b) employing it. The form of this argument suggests that it is conceivable, but highly improbable, that sociologists in the future might cease to employ such extra-epistemic values.

Thus, we have not completely ruled out the possibility of value freedom. In other words, an adherent to a value free position might argue: "Since value freedom or neutrality is still a possibility then we should still strive to attain it, to seek it as far as possible. Although I may now hold a wide range of values and seem likely to employ them as a sociologist now and in the future, this fact by itself in

no way precludes me from doing my best to try to eliminate them whenever and wherever I can." While we may feel strongly the need to disagree with the position which claims that our discipline is only obliged to produce knowledge, it may not be necessary for us to maintain those arguments in order to demonstrate the need for a high level extra-epistemic value orientation. That is, we may accept the above-quoted value free adherent's reasoning, as far as it goes (provided he does not go on to argue that as a result the value free position is sufficient for guiding our actions). In particular, we may agree that to the extent that individual sociologists continue to employ extra-epistemic value judgments (either (a) because they feel for various reasons that they ought to, or in the case of the value free sociologist, (b) because they do despite efforts to avoid them), a decision or goal orientation must be chosen to deal with the values employed, if we hold strongly to any of the following:

either, (1) We wish to avoid the hypocrisy of saying we are free from all values other than the value of knowledge when we are not,

or, (2) We feel that we must justify specific value choices that we do make, with reference to a more general value orientation,

or, (3) We feel we have an obligation to evaluate the decisions made by other sociologists and which have an impact that extends beyond the discipline.

If the above are accepted, and they will be here, both individual sociologists and the discipline as a whole must choose an extra-epistemic decision or goal orientation that could

be used to guide, justify, and evaluate those values that are employed despite the efforts of some to avoid them.

Again, to the extent that extra-epistemic values do and seem likely to continue to play an important role in the discipline of sociology, the value free position is both descriptively and prescriptively inadequate in dealing with them. As a result, it is argued that sociology must choose an extra-empistemic value orientation, and the real question confronting sociology is not whether to include an extra-epistemic value orientation, but which such orientation should be chosen.

Before turning to this question, let us briefly examine three additional major positions concerning values in sociology to see to what extent they can help us in answering it.

Sociology as "Value Full" - Value Explication

From time to time one hears sociology students and faculty in conversation tossing out the idea that sociology must be "value full." Unfortunately, the meaning of this term is not quite clear. Presumably, the term means that one should accept all values as legitimate (or why might one strive to be full of them?), yet the call for "value fullness" is usually preceded by a critical remark concerning the value of the types of activities that value free sociologists are believed to engage in. A variant is that in

light of the fact that sociologists cannot be value free, they must therefore be "value full." Again, if we take the phrase at face value this argument can be extended to: I cannot avoid eating and still live; therefore, I must make a pig of myself. Presumably, however, we don't have to incorporate all extra-epistemic values into sociology - especially not those that are obviously contradictory, or those that are simply not valued by anyone. Thus, the real meaning of "value full" probably is that sociology ought to be value relevant rather than value laden. However, saying that we should be value full in this sense is of as little help in making the choices we face as saying that we ought to be value free. Thus, as far as help in making value choices is concerned, we have gained nothing by switching to this position.

A corollary of the value full position, with similar problems, is the commonly held idea that since we cannot be value free we should express and clearly delineate or explicate the values which we employ in doing sociology (for example, see Braude, 1964:399). Thus, because value judgments

> ...are unavoidable...there is and can be no value free sociology. The only choice is between an honest expression of one's values, as open and honest as it can be, this side of the psychoanalytical couch, and a vain ritual of moral neutrality which, because it invites men to ignore the vulnerability of reason to bias, leaves it at the mercy of irrationality (Gouldner, 1962:212).

We might at least expect that those who urge us to express our values should express their own,[13] which is often not the case. (It should be noted that saying some form of "I value that which is good," hardly constitutes an explication of one's values, in that all it does is state repetitiously that one has them.) More importantly, while sociologists' expressing their values seems to be all that is required, this hardly seems sufficient. One must agree that those who call for sociologists to express their values would not be entirely satisfied if all sociologists were to purchase soapboxes, stand upon them, and proudly proclaim all of their values. If one were more suspicious still, one might suspect that when others often ask for values to be expressed, they do so because they have already guessed what they are and wished to have them verbalized so they may be more readily attacked. At any rate, again it would seem that all values are not equally valued by sociologists, any more than by others. While expressing values may be an important first step, it is not much help to us in choosing between them.[14]

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[13]It should be pointed out that at least in a later article Gouldner (1968) does explicate his dominant value (which will be discussed in the final chapter).

[14]Neither does merely expressing values guarantee that their potential biasing effects will be ruled out.

The Ultimate Benefit of Knowledge

Early in Chapter II, the idea of knowledge as an end in itself was discussed as a corollary of the "value free" position. It was pointed out that this idea was usually put forth in conjunction with the distinguishable notion that knowledge will ultimately be of benefit to mankind. Merton (1963:86) contends that both an intrinsic and an ultimate rationale underlies all science. It is quite understandable that sociologists who by training and inclination come to love and revere knowledge would also hold the faith commitment that something that is believed to be good in itself will lead to a greater good. Since the goodness that is assumed to be brought about by knowledge is in the distant future (ultimately), what clearly is involved is a faith commitment, or a hope, which is usually recognized as such. This hope for usefulness and benefit in the long run is stated in different ways. Bendix states that "...there is the hope that in the long run the constructive use of knowledge will prevail" (1970:833). Sociologists do not go "...so far as the famous mathematician who, when asked what he was doing, replied that whatever it was he hoped it would never be of use to anybody," but are willing to endure the "...considerable time lag between their discovery and their final impression upon society" (Bierstedt, 1948:316).

Coser states this faith commitment as well and with as much specificity as anyone:

> This sociological enterprise , as all scientific enterprise, is ultimately grounded in the hope that greater knowledge of man will enhance his stature. While we may no longer be able to harbor the idea of the Enlightenment that the truth necessarily will set man free, we still cling obstinately to the hope that our endeavors will enhance the self awareness of mankind and enable, through self-conscious planning, to overcome at least some of the impediments that have been the burden of previous history (Coser, 1969:132).

The faith commitment that sociological knowledge will ultimately be beneficial is both attractive and comforting. Regretably, it is not without difficulties. The first problem with this faith commitment is that it is a faith commitment - and faith commitments can be discussion stoppers. That is, once one sociologist states that "I have faith that sociological knowledge will ultimately issue into a wide range of benefits to mankind," and a second states that "I have just as much faith that sociological knowledge will ultimately be harmful to mankind and eventually destroy it," they really can have very little more to say to one another on the topic. If the basis for their positions is merely faith, there is really no way of choosing between them. Still, if we treat the statement, "knowledge will ultimately be beneficial," as an assumption rather than as a matter of faith we can question whether there are adequate grounds for this assumption.

Lynd contends that this faith commitment in ultimate benefit originally was grounded in 19th century optimism.

> Immediate relevance has not been regarded as so important as ultimate relevance, and, in the burgeoning nineteenth century world which viewed all times as moving within the Master System of Progress, there was seemingly large justification for this optimistic tolerance.
>
> Our contemporary world is losing its confidence in the inevitability of Progress. Mens' ways of ordering their common lives have broken down so disastrously as to make hope precarious (Lynd, 1948:2).

Assuming that no Master Plan will lead to the beneficient use of knowledge, there is no reason to assume that men will use knowledge to the benefit of mankind. If Marx has made any contribution to sociology it is clearly that mental changes or changes in the spirit need have no effect on the objective social situation, and thus the growth of knowledge need say nothing about any required changes in objective conditions to insure that benefit will result. Further, as discussed earlier, if knowledge is ethically neutral in that it can be used for a wide variety of ends - ultimately beneficial and harmful - then there seems to be no warrant for assuming that it will lead to ultimate benefit.

In the final analysis, it is probably impossible to predict whether knowledge is of ultimate benefit, if the nature of "benefit" is not specified. Since

there are innumerable conceptions of what "benefit" or good might consist of, it is indeed difficult to assess whether it will occur. Holding such a general faith commitment creates a dilemma. If it is left at such a general level, there is no way of knowing the likelihood that "ultimate benefit" will be achieved, or even if the conception of benefit of the person who holds the commitment is congruent or antithetical to the conception held by others. On the other hand, if the benefit is specified (we know what it is and express it) it is likely that many will disagree that this ultimate benefit is a benefit. Further, even if the nature of the benefit is agreed on, the question still is are the odds good enough that this benefit will occur without our intervention, that we should risk not attaining it. If it is a benefit, why should we not seek it directly rather than merely hope for its occurance?

Finally, the hope that knowledge will ultimately lead to "good," does not, due to its lack of specificity, help us in choosing values to employ in doing sociology. Saying that sociological knowledge will ultimately lead to benefit does not indicate that one is neutral with regard to values, but only that one is unable or unwilling to specify them. At the same time, it is of little help in guiding value choices, as is the position of value freedom.

Sociological Relevance

In addition to those who see an ultimate benefit of sociology, there are also those who seek an immediate benefit. Lynd, while claiming that in social science "...immediate relevance has not been regarded as so important as ultimate relevance,"argues that immediate relevance should be given priority and that researches and activities of social scientists should be made relevant to the problems of the day (1948:2ff). This idea that sociology should possess an immediate relevance is expressed in many forms, ranging from saying that sociological knowledge should be sought and applied to immediate ends, to calls that the sociologist's life should be relevant to current social problems through active attempts to solve them.

At one end of the continuum, it may be argued that while it is quite permissible for the sociologist to do "pure research," that research should be made relevant by "after an appraisal that may well be agonizing, declar [ing] all the social consequences he may foresee, however dimly which are even remotely likely to follow the disclosure not only of his own contributions to science but also those of other scientists within his wide area of competence" (Sir R. Watson-Watt, in Bennis, 1968:253). Others argue that immediate relevance of research must be weighted more heavily.

Preceding research, the extent to which various possible researches would contribute to the body of sociological theory, and the solution of social problems should be predicted. Since both may not be maximized in any single piece of research, it is suggested that relevance to social problems must be maximized. Beal argues in this way for optimizing sociological relevance.

> Basically what I have argued for is that it is probable that the maximization of the goals of conceptual development, theory building, and testing, measurement, improvement in analysis techniques, and research on significant social problems are at some point in conflict. With the present state of knowledge, methodology, personnel, and funds, we cannot maximize all of these goals...I am...arguing for a heavier weighing of the contribution of the knowledge produced to the relevant social problems variable in the optimizing model (Beal, 1969:473-474).

Still others argue that it is not sufficient for the knowledge of a social science to be relevant. In addition, the lives of social scientists themselves must be directed in terms of relevant action. (Clearly the term relevance applies here, although it is often not used in this context, in that some kind of immediate rather than ultimate benefit is directly sought.) Thus, Bennis offers a general plea for relevant social activity: "I see no alternative to an active role for the Faculties of Social Sciences. This means they should not only adapt to societies, but that they should also influence society directly" (1968:252). Similarly, Etzkowitz argues, "...as sociologists we do not have

to confine ourselves to merely understanding and analyzing what others are doing. As sociologists, we have the possibility, as well as the moral obligation, to enter into the institutional life of our society to initiate reforms or even to take part in the construction of new institutional conceptions as social realities" (1969:12).

It should be noted parenthetically, that pleas for relevance in sociology are met with criticism, and some of these criticisms have already been encountered in terms of the "value free sociology" and "knowledge for its own sake" positions. One primary criticism is that shifting emphasis to relevance may have a dilatory effect on the body of sociological knowledge. Thus, Coser states that while the work of scientists such as Freud and Mendel at the time seemed irrelevant, their work had a profound and revolutionary impact on the world as well as on the body of knowledge. On the other hand, "The majority of those men who, in their day, worked on the 'relevant issues' remain of interest, at best, to specialized historians of ideas" (Coser, 1969:132). Contrary to Coser, it may be argued that it was precisely those who worked on the "relevant issues" of their day, such as Pasteur, who significantly contributed to their respective sciences. This may be especially true of sociology if Kulgen is correct when he argues that there is a close relationship

between sociological and social problems: "It is no accident, however, that problems are so often socially and sociologically important. In society humans are doing what in sociology humans are studying...what large numbers of people identify as serious social problems are likely to involve basic and disputed questions about the relation of man to his social environment" (Kulgen, 1970:183-4). Yet the question of the actual historical impact which knowledge which was sought for its direct relevance has had on the bodies of knowledge is difficult to assess. Since numerous examples and counter-examples could be mustered for each side of the issue, the question of the contribution of "relevant" research to the body of knowledge through the history of science is probably best left to those best qualified - historians of science.

A more telling criticism of the pleas for relevance may be that they are "hollow" or empty. They are hollow in two senses. First, sociologists are already relevant. Second, these pleas do not tell us to what we should be relevant.

First, it must be pointed out that those sociologists who would presumably be the objects of the accusations of those who deplore a lack of relevant research - are often doing research that is relevant to the body of sociological knowledge. Obviously, these sociologists are not doing research then that is totally irrelevant to anything. However, it may be argued by

those who make such pleas that "this criticism is unfair. Clearly by the term 'relevant' we mean relevant to valued ends which are non-epistemic in nature." Even though it may not be clear to us to what the relevance requested is relevant, we may grant this, and still the objection that the pleas are hollow stands. This is because sociologists are also doing, and have been doing, research that is relevant to non-epistemic valued ends.

> Also, it must be stressed that, to a considerable degree, sociologists are engaged in studies that are relevant, and which usually involve a value judgment even if it is unstated. What else are we to make of all the studies on crime, delinquency, race relations, the family, industrial sociology, suicide, urban problems and political behavior and so on?
>
> Few people will argue that the issues...are not relevant, and it seems fairly clear that most of the sociologists involved are against crime, delinquency, and suicide, and are concerned with understanding these phenomena in order to help in their prevention and control. In fact, these judgments are often quite explicitly stated (Biblarz, 1969:3).

Sociologists, then are and have been "relevant." While they recognize the relevance of sociology, there are those who strongly oppose the ways in which relevance is seen as manifesting itself.

> In at least one sense, there seems to be little doubt about the relevance of the discipline as presently constituted...As consultants, managers, and administrators, sociologists have had the sense of being centrally involved in policy formation and implementation.

> Involvement and relevance have been manifested in as many ways as policy and fashion dictated: one generation of social scientists would provide the social science brief for discriminatory immigration laws; the next would as assuredly document the case for school desegregation. And with the rise of national welfare bureaucracies, the proliferation of private and public funding agencies, and the adaptation of the university to governmental needs, the sociologist has clearer evidence for believing in his relevance - but all too often fails to recognize that his prime relevance is to a limited category of political, corporate, and bureaucratic clients (Colfax, 1970:73).

Whether we value the values to which sociology is currently directed, it must be recognized that sociology is in fact relevant to some values. Thus, pleas for sociology to become relevant are hollow in that they ask sociology to become what is already is.[15] Much of this chapter bolsters this criticism that the call for relevance is a hollow one, in that it demonstrates that sociologists are seeking knowledge which is useable by themselves and others for valued ends, and that further, they are directly involved in attaining such ends. There are innumerable examples in the past and the present of sociology being made relevant to a wide range of social concerns. These include sociology being used by sociologists in areas such as law enforcement, the development of foreign policy, race relations, social

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[15]It is difficult to explain why these calls for relevance persist, but it may be that the concept of relevance may be used ego-centrically. In other words, research is accused of irrelevance if it is irrelevant to those ends which "I" value.

planning with regard to poverty, coping with aging, community development, manpower, public health, peace research, and adaptation to rapid change (for detailed examples of sociological relevance in these and other areas, see Lazarsfeld et al., 1967; and Shostak, 1974).

Moreover, these pleas for relevance are hollow in a second sense - they do not tell us to what we should be relevant. As a result they are of little help in guiding the choices we must make. For example, consider how much the following exhortation actually tells us:

> It is much simpler to withdraw from the world of men and rather contemplate them from the Olympian heights of abstruse scholarship. It is precisely this which the sociologist has done. He has surrendered to an image of science his mandate not only to discover but to use his knowledge for the human weal. It is not enough to say as he has said: I have knowledge; here it is to use - by others. It is not enough to retire from the field, hors de combat. The sociologist has the responsibility to enter the fray and, as sociologist, cry out for a better human condition than now obtains (Braude, 1964:398).

While some find exhortations such as these uplifting and exhilarating, in the final analysis they tell us very little. "A better human condition" is desirable, but just what might that better condition be? We often have little idea as to what ends sociologists should value and to what their research activity should be relevant. To say that the work of sociologists should be relevant to social problems says little more than that we should not value what should not be valued. In other words, these pleas merely urge us to seek the good and avoid the

bad, but leave unanswered the question as to what each of these might be. Some of these pleas for relevance are more specific as to exactly what the social problems are to which they refer--i.e. war, crime, poverty, etc. However, still left unspecified are the values that underlie these choices and the justification for those values.

> Thus Robert Lynd, in Knowledge for What?, contrasted the gravity of our social problems with the triviality of much social research. 'Seismologists watching a volcano' he called the fact finders, and he appealed to them to tackle manfully their main job, which is to reconstruct our whole society. Max Lerner enthusiastically applauded this 'unashamed instrumentalism.' He hailed Lynd for having staked out 'the most spacious claims for the possibilities of social thinking;' he condemned the 'detachment' and 'objectivity' of other social scientists as mere 'dodges to avoid thinking, devices for saving their skins.' Both men are saying, at bottom, that now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country (Muller, 1964:174)[16]

Unfortunately, these and similar pleas urge this and offer little more in terms of the nature and justification of the values to which sociology should be relevant. In short, these pleas do not allow us the means for making the necessary value choices. Early in this chapter the value free position was criticized for not allowing us to deal with the extra-epistemic

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[16]Muller (1964:174) continues: "Unhappily, these stirring words do not solve the actual problem (not to mention the question of just what a scientist can do about a volcano)."

values that are present in sociology and seem likely to continue in the future. Given the fact that numerous decisions must be made in sociology which demand extra-epistemic values, the value free position was criticized for not helping sociologists make these decisions. We have further seen that the "sociological relevance," as well as the "value full - explication," and the "knowledge as ultimate value" positions are similarly unhelpful in dealing with extra-epistemic values, even though analysis of these issues makes us all the more aware that values are present and remain to be dealt with. This is not to say that each of these positions has not performed a valuable and necessary service - they have, but it is now time to go beyond them.

As Kenneth Benne points out, the fact that there is so much concern about values by sociologists and other social scientists is rather unusual. It would not be surprising, under conditions where power is unequally distributed, for those who possess the predominance of power to discuss the validity and value of their possessing that power. It would also not be surprising for those with relatively little power to attempt to sanction the norms that control the exercise of control by those in power. "It is probably more unusual for men with some new legacy of power to seek norms controlling their own exercise of that power in their

relations with others" (Benne, 1965:1). Social scientists now have some limited power, "...and accumulating behavioral knowledge promises to enlarge the power of psychologists and other behavioral scientists over others. What normative orientation, what value system, should constrain and guide the scientist in the exercise of and contribution to behavioral control?" (Benne, 1965:1).

The question of what normative orientation sociology as a profession and sociologists as individuals should choose must now be met squarely rather than simply alluded to. It is perhaps finally time to actually explicate our values and cease calling for their explication. We must deal with the questions of what benefit sociology is likely to be in the near or distant future, to what valued ends it should be relevant.

It has been argued in the preceding pages that sociologists face numerous decisions that cannot be made solely with reference to pure knowledge concerns. Further, the profession as a whole needs an extra-epistemic reference with which to evaluate these decisions. What needs now to be discussed and debated is the "decision orientation" or "goal orientation" which could serve as such a point of reference. Also, both individual sociologists and the profession as a whole are faced with questions concerning how sociologists might justifiably use the knowledge themselves, and in what directions the

use by others should be encouraged or discouraged. These answers to the questions again imply the choice of a "decision orientation," and a specification of the ends we are seeking in terms of a "goal orientation."[17]

The choice of a decision or goal orientation in turn demands the discussion of the basis for such a choice. Chapter IV presents a discussion of what might be called the "sceptic's view" concerning the use of facts as the basis for the choice of a non-epistimic orientation. ChapterVI returns to the basic question of the basis of choice of an orientation, discussing an "evolutionary-naturalistic view" which clearly runs counter to the "sceptic's view."

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[17]Since the setting of a high level goal orientation also acts to orient decisions by providing a reference for evaluating decisions, and in short one high level orientation can suggest both sub-goals and decisions as to how to obtain them, the terms "decision orientation" and "goal orientation" are used interchangeably, although they may be conceived in other contexts as analytically distinct.

# CHAPTER IV.

## ONE POSSIBLE BASIS FOR THE CHOICE OF A DECISION OR GOAL ORIENTATION: THE SCEPTIC'S VIEW OF FACTS AND VALUES

Sociologists and sociology as a profession are now in a position where they must explicitly discuss extra-epistemic decision orientations which may direct and be used to evaluate choices involved in seeking knowledge, action by sociologists, and the use of sociological knowledge. If we consider a value to be a standard of worth (Kaplan, 1964:370), which expresses a preference, a system of values may be considered to be a system or set of preferences. Boulding (1967:12-13) argues that any subculture holds such a system of value-preferences, which while common to the members of the subculture are distinguishable (uncommon) in reference to other sub-cultures. More importantly, each subculture possesses a metavalue or set of metavalues, which Boulding terms an "ethic" (and that is termed here a "decision or goal orientation"),[1] and which may be used "for evaluating and

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[1]While the term "ethic" probably conveys what Boulding has in mind, its usage in philosophy seems to demand greater specificity and a somewhat different form than do sets of meta-values such as those we loosely term "truth" or "knowledge". To avoid confusion the terms "decision orientation" and "goal orientation" are used here in place of the term "ethic". This distinction will be discussed later.

legitimating preference systems" (Boulding, 1967:12). Science may similarly be said to be a subculture and also to possess a decision orientation which is generally agreed upon and made explicit. As Boulding points out, this orientation exists in two closely related yet distinguishable forms.

> There is in the first place, a high preference for veracity. The only really unforgivable sin of the scientist is deliberate deception and the publication of false results. The career of any scientist who has destroyed his credibility in this way is virtually over...
>
> Along with the preference for veracity goes a strong preference for truth. These are not the same things. Veracity is the absence of deceit, and truth is the absence of error (Boulding, 1967:13).

This set of metavalues or orientation of sociology, and indeed of all science, is clearly <u>epistemic</u> in nature and allows evaluation of a wide number of lower level values systems. On the basis of the preceding arguments, it may further be argued that a similar, non-epistemic orientation is needed in sociology. This non-epistemic orientation would, in a parellel manner, allow evaluation and legitimation of lower level value systems inherent in making the necessary choices involved in seeking and using sociological knowledge, which cannot be made solely on the basis of knowledge-related values. Ideally, we would like to "prove" the validity of our choice of an orientation. However, this may not be possible.

There are those who do argue that the correctness of values may be proven in that values may be shown to be correct or incorrect by empirical test. In other words, the correctness of values exists to be discovered, and may therefore be treated as objective.[2] Thus, Kolb points out that there is a group of sociologists who believe that "...somehow in the structure of the universe values objectively exist independently of their apprehension and espousal by man. Thus if it is objectively wrong to commit murder it is wrong even though no man knows or espouses it" (W. Kolb in Dewey and Humber, 1966:647). In accordance with this view, since values inhere in objects, their correctness may be proven or discovered empirically. For example, a sociologist can prove that a certain social arrangement is wrong because it leads to hunger. Therefore, sociologists can presumably study the social world and discover which non-epistemic orientation should guide their discipline.

A contrary position to that just briefly presented is offered here. It might be called the "sceptic's view", in that it is sceptical about our ability to validate or justify claims of value solely with reference to knowledge claims or

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[2] The idea that values may be treated as objective is argued in a different way by those who hold what philosophers term the "Intuitionist" perspective (who might argue for example that human beings possess a unique faculty for intuiting values; that value statements are therefore descriptive statements; and that values are objective but non-observable.)

facts. According to this sceptic's view the idea that the correctness of values is provable, in that they are empirically discoverable, is at this time an undemonstrated assertion. Until this assertion or some other assertion can be more adequately demonstrated, the sceptic's view sees another assertion that runs counter to it as being more acceptable.

Specifically, it is asserted that the validity of values is ultimately non-demonstrable or provable by reference to facts.[3] This assertion is based on the idea that every statement of the value of some given object or state of affairs is based on a prior, higher level value judgment. Each statement of value at increasingly higher levels in turn demands yet a higher level value judgment until finally a metavalue is chosen which must be merely asserted to be of value. In short, the justification of every value requires higher level values until we reach a point at which the value of that value is necessarily assumptive.[4]

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[3]The term "fact" is used here to designate what is the case, or is actual.

[4]It should be pointed out that the sceptic's view does not contradict the idea that <u>in practice</u> groups' values change with changes in their conception of the facts, or that the choice of values may be explainable sociologically in terms of fact. Rather, this view argues that values cannot be validated or justified solely with reference to facts. In short, the sceptic's view sees an important separation between explaining held values and justifying them. In ChapterVI a contrary "evolutionary-naturalistic" view is presented which offers a strong challenge to this separation.

Consider the case of an agricultural reform. If a sociologist studies an experimental agricultural reform within a culture, how is he to determine that this reform is of value? On studying the reform he may say "I have discovered that this reform is not to be valued because it leads to unproductively sized farm plots." When asked why unproductively sized farm plots are not valuable, he may respond that "they lead to low crop yields." When asked why low crop yields are not to be valued, he will probably refer to numerous other valued states in turn, until he says "because it leads to hunger." As strongly as many of us hold this higher level negative value concerning hunger, the adherent to the sceptic's view would argue that it must be recognized that hunger's lack of value is also assumptive, and would point out that there are groups that do value hunger, offer rationales to support it, and under certain circumstances are willing to fast until death. With regard to the "empirical test" or "proof" of any particular value or of the value of some state of affairs, the point at which one reaches the level of a value which is necessarily assumptive will, of course, vary.

Often, however, such a question of value will regress to a question of the value of existence. Consider the case of a tree. According to this position, if we look at a tree there is no way for us to "see" value in it.

This is because there is no value within the tree, but rather the value is imposed by us upon the tree.[5] In contrast, it may be argued that we do not see the value of the tree because values do not exist in objects or states of affairs but rather in relations between them. The sceptic may grant this, and ask that we look at the tree and its relation to other things around it. We find that the tree is of value to the bird who uses it for a nest, the house builder who needs wood, or to the hill it sits on in that it prevents erosion. All of these statements of valued relations assume that the bird, the house builder, and the hill are themselves of value, and the tree gains value by contributing to their welfare.

Thus, the tree's value is tied to their value. We may look to still other relations to support the contention that the bird, house builder, and hill are valuable. Ultimately, however, we must reach a point where we say that the existence of X (i.e. the house builder) is of value. But what warrants stating that the existence of X is of value?

Without reference to another value, it cannot be

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[5]It is important to note that while it is argued that values do not inhere in the object, this in no way denies that valuing is an interactive process. That is there must exist an object to value as well as a valuer for valuing to take place. Yet this interactional process of valuing is primarily one of imposition of value upon the valued object by the valuer.

demonstrated that the existence of X is of value which is greater than the value of the existence of Y, in that existence must equal existence. Without reference to another value, it is not demonstrable that one form of the existence of X is greater value than some other form of existence of X. Or more telling still, it is not possible to demonstrate that the existence of X is of greater value than the non-existence of X. If this were the case, all that is ought to be. As logically odd as it might appear, we can say further that non-existence is just another form of existence (in that as far as we know matter and energy do not cease to exist but rather change form and are continually reorganizing). To put this matter somewhat more concretely, would the universe be less of value if man had never existed in it?[6] Ultimately, according to the sceptic's view, we must assume even the value of a given substance - its value is neither discoverable nor demonstrable (unless of course we make reference to some assumed higher level value). It is asserted then that

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[6]All that would be lost perhaps is values themselves. Parenthetically, it should be noted that it can be argued that mankind has added value to the universe in that he has a possibility of comprehending the universe, and that if man had never existed this possibility and thus value would be lost. While this idea may be comforting to <u>man</u>, it is unclear how this would comfort the <u>universe</u>, or how the universe would be of less value for having never been comprehended.

the validity of values is non-demonstrable or provable by reference to facts in that such a demonstration rests upon (a perhaps implicit) a priori assumption of value.

It may be argued in opposition to the sceptic's view that the correctness of certain states of affairs is discoverable, in that certain of these high level values are shared by all mankind, and therefore we can determine whether the state of affairs is to be valued by seeing if it or its consequences are implied by this universally shared higher level value. It may be agreed that once a value is universally held, certain states of affairs can be tested against it and it can be therefore "empirically shown" whether those states are in accordance with that value. Similarly, certain lower level values can be said to be consistent or inconsistent with the higher level value. Even granting this, (1) it is unlikely that any universally held highest level value would exist, and (2) even if such a value was found, it's value would only universally be assumed, and would not necessarily be valid because it is universally held.

Whether there are in fact any such universally held high level values probably can be put to an empirical test if we are willing to commit the immense time and resources necessary. However, even if such a test were carried out, it seems highly unlikely that

any such test would yield a universally held highest level value. For example, consider the possibility of men all valuing their own existences. While there would be those who would prefer life over any other value, there would also be those who would prefer non-existence over certain forms of existence. In short, there are those who would, and have, preferred death to certain forms of life.

In the same vein, while societies probably consider every person who commits suicide to be irrational, there is no necessary reason for sociologists to make the same characterization. Clearly all of us can imagine that one would quite reasonably and rationally choose to commit suicide rather than continue in that form of existence. No matter how strongly we may disagree with their actions, it is likely that it is we who are being irrational if we assume that every Kami-Kazi pilot who deliberately sacrificed his life in World War II was irrational.[7]

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[7]It is unclear if there are any societies that when faced with what appears to be intolerable circumstances, have "chosen" non-existence directly, or courses of action which are recognized as having a high probability of leading to nonexistence. At any rate, one can clearly conceive of such a "choice" (if societies can make choices), and certainly there are numerous examples of societies going to war in which they risk non-existence for the sake of other valued ends, suggesting that societal existence was not the highest value.

As is the case with existence, there seems to be no higher level value which would be held universally. It is important to note that even if there were such a universally held value, no validity would be conferred upon it by virtue of the fact that it is universally valued. We would have discovered not something that is correct because it is universally held, but only a value that is universally assumed.

In sum, then, the sceptic's view asserts that values are ultimately non-demonstrable with reference to facts. As such, this view can probably best be categorized as what is termed in the philosophical literature a non-cognitivist or non-descriptivist view. As Frankena points out, "the most extreme of these are a number of views that deny ethical judgments, or at least the most basic ones, to be capable of any kind of rational or objectively valid justification" (1973:105). The sceptic's view clearly would concur with such a position and thus is probably best classified as a non-cognitivist view. Strictly speaking it seems, however, that philosophers assume that non-cognitivist theories make statements not only about the demonstrability of values, but also about the nature of the <u>meaning</u> of value statements For example, "emotivists" argue that value statements, rather than making a statement of fact, are really expressing deep-seated emotions. To illustrate, one "emotivist,"

A. J. Ayer, "...has suggested that ethical predicates are like exclamation points of a special kind, that 'stealing is wrong!' is a misleading way of putting 'stealing!!!' where the triple exclamation point is taken to express horror or indignation" (Brandt, 1959:204). Some logical positivists, like Rudolf Carnap, agreed that value statements are not descriptive of anything, but considered them to be disguised commands. Thus, Carnap would take "stealing is wrong!" as meaning in a disguised way, "do not steal." Both Carnap and Ayer would agree that value sentences are forms of speech that are important to social life, but such forms of speech certainly do not state a fact, nor describe that which is true or false (Brandt, 1959:204). Still other views as to the meaning of ethical statements have been offered, such as that of Bertram Russell, who held that moral judgments merely express a certain kind of wish (Frankena, 1973:105). In presenting the sceptic's view, no specific theory of the meaning of ethical statements has been offered and presentation of such a theory seems unnecessary for present purposes. However, at a general level the various theories seem to concur that value statements are non-descriptive and non-factual, even though they sometimes may be improperly presented as factual or descriptive. Thus, the sceptic's view seems most appropriately fixed philosophically with the "non-cognitivists" or "non-descriptivists," even though

its prime focus is the jsutification rather than the closely related area of the meaning of value statements.

In the preceding pages, the "sceptic's view" of the relationship between facts and values has been presented. It asserts that the validity or correctness of values is ultimately non-demonstrable with reference to facts - in short, unless some high level value is simply assumed, one cannot legitimately go from an "Is" to an "Ought." At the same time the values held by individuals, groups, and societies can be explained by the social sciences without reference to a mystical or cosmic source from which values were once universally believed to spring. It may be implied that if the sceptic's view is adopted, and values are not seen as validated by facts or allowed the claim of legitimacy due to a mystical parenthood, values have been robbed of their importance. Yet it need not follow that they have been so robbed, for even if the social sciences reach the point where the holding of values is fully explained, values would remain important to men in that men act on the basis of values.[8] There is no

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[8] even if we re-name and/or reconceptualize them.

reason to believe that because we have explained values we have made them less valuable to men. Although we may quantify them, re-label and dissect them with new constructs, and reach a point where we can predict their occurrence, this in no way proves that they are invalid or incorrect. Nor do we show that values are unimportant or unnecessary. When we explain something, we explain it - we do not explain it away.

Herbert Muller argues cogently in this area:

> And the familiar statement that human life is 'meaningless' may itself be meaningless for practical purposes. All readers are acquainted with the melancholy picture: of matter as a mad dance of electrons, of life as 'a disease which afflicts matter in its old age,' of man as a forked form of life that has learned to strut and fret - of the whole witless show playing itself out mechanically before an empty house, the only issue being whether the universe is exploding or running down. But in denying the existence of a consciousness outside the universe, an intelligible purpose behind the whole enterprise, the disenchanted forget that there is nevertheless a consciousness aware of the universe, and that life has a very urgent meaning for those who consciously live it. If man's purposes make little perceptible difference to the universe, they make a great deal to him.
>
> Yet neither is this to say that whatever is is right. We cannot prove that it is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied, even if we alone know both sides of the question. We cannot say that consciousness and thought must be good because nature produced them; nature has produced, and destroyed, all kinds of oddities (Muller, 1964:33).

When we explain why someone finds a situation meaningful, with all the necessary references to social-

ization, reinforcement contingencies, environmental constraints, or what have you, we make the situation no less meaningful to that person. Nor have we demonstrated that it is invalid to find it so.

Even when a child cries over something that we consider insignificant, we need not deny the reality of the hurt or pronounce it insignificant to the child. Similarly, the sociology of religion, while it makes no assumption concerning the existence of God and assumes that religious beliefs are explainable in "natural" terms, does not assume that practices are insignificant or that the feelings that lead to them are not deep. In short, neither assuming that peoples' possession of values is explainable in "natural" terms, nor asserting with the sceptic that the validity of values is non-demonstrable, implies that they are or should be insignificant in human life.

Moreover, the assertion made - that the validity of values is ultimately non-demonstrable or provable by reference to facts - asserts just that: their validity is ultimately non-demonstrable. It does not assert either that all values are invalid, nor on the other hand, in some relativistic way, that all values are valid for those who possess them. First, it does not assert that all values are invalid in some ultimate sense. They may in fact be valid, but there is simply no way of demonstrating their validity. Just as the sociology of religion assumes that

the existence of God is non-demonstrable, while neither affirming nor denying His existence, so the sceptic argues that the validity of values is non-demonstrable, without either affirming nor denying their ultimate validity.

Similarly, it should not be concluded that the sceptic's view necessarily implies some extreme form of ethical relativism. Presumably one who would take a stance of ethical relativism would argue that all individual (or group, or societal) value stances are valid relative to each individual (or group, or society). To the contrary, the sceptic is arguing that in the final analysis all such stances are of non-demonstrable or merely assumptive validity. According to the sceptic, all values are not equally valid, but rather they are equally non-demonstrable. What is argued, then, is not some form of extreme relativism, but rather extreme scepticism.

Since it is held that the validity of all values is equally non-demonstrable, knowing the characteristics of the individuals, groups, or societies who hold those values makes the values they hold no more demonstrable. Thus, a corollary of the sceptic's view may be offered. It is asserted that no characteristics of the individuals (groups, societies, etc.) who hold certain values confer any extra, special validity on those values. In this limited sense, it is asserted that no individual's values are of greater validity than those of another individual due to the char-

acteristics that either possesses. For example, this assumes that a particular individual's values are not of greater validity because he holds a position of authority in a religious community and makes claims of divine inspiration. While certain individuals are better able to convince others to adopt their values, to actualize goals resulting from those values, etc., due to greater power, access to resources, or ingenuity, none of these characteristics of the individuals confers any greater validity on the values they hold.

This implies that the values of sociologists have no greater validity than anyone else's. This is not implied by the counter assertion, discussed earlier, that the correctness of values is discoverable. If the correctness of values is discoverable empirically and thus is closely related to facts, the sociologist should have the correct conception of the good society in that he knows the most about social life. His knowledge allows him to make correct value judgments. His empirical competence implies a competence in making value judgments.

> It [the doctrine of value freedom] is inappropriate for if the discipline which claims to know the most about the nature of social life does not offer its most reasoned judgments, to whom does the obligation fall? It would seem to those less competent to make them - which also seems absurd (Gray, 1968:180).

This statement confuses epistemic competence with value judgmental competence. The validity of the values of sociologists has no less an assumptive basis than the validity of anyone's values. If sociological knowledge determines the correctness of values and dictates action, presumably we should administer a test of sociological knowledge - perhaps the Advanced Graduate Record Examination in sociology might do - find the sociologist who scores highest, and say "tell us what we should value and tell us what we should do." However, even if the sceptic admits that this sociologist can best show us the means to actualize our values, or show us the implications, there is no reason for assuming that the sociologist's values are ultimately more valuable than anyone else's. On this point, the sceptic's view is probably in agreement with those of the value free position that "the scientific method as such provides no technique for answering questions of value, for determining ultimate ends..." (Bierstedt, 1948:312), and thus scientists have no monopoly on "correct" values.

Gouldner attempts to place us on the horns of a dilemma in this matter, and we have just discussed the first horn - that of technical competence:

> If technical competence does provide a warrant for making value judgments there is nothing to prohibit sociologists from making them

> within the area of their expertise. If, on the contrary, technical competence provide no warrant for making value judgments then, at least sociologists are as free to do so as anyone else; then their value judgments are at least as good as anyone else's, say a twelve year old child's (Gouldner, 1962:200).

The second horn of this dilemma is not really problematic if we take Gouldner at face value. Sociologists are <u>just</u> as free as anyone else to make value judgments, and those value judgments have ultimately the <u>same</u> assumptive validity as anyone else's. Clearly then, the sociologist by virtue of being a sociologist has no right to dictate the values of others. Sociologists, it is argued, can no more than others discover the "correctness" of values, and claims of greater knowledge, or greater intelligence, or whatever, make values no more "correct" because persons with these qualities happen to hold them.

The sceptic's view as presented would of course not be without critics. An alternate view will be presented in Chapter VI, that would take issue with it at several points and offer a very different position. This work does not attempt or demand a choice between the views. Rather it is suggested that either position is sufficiently persuasive that some form of either might be accepted by many sociologists. As such, it would seem worthwhile to examine the implications of the adoption of either view for the choice of a goal or decision orientation by the

discipline of sociology.

If the sceptic's view is accepted, sociology is seemingly placed in an irreconcilably difficult position. On one hand, non-epistemic values significantly enter at numerous points in the knowledge-gathering process and shape the resulting body of knowledge - as well as decisions concerning its use by sociologists and non-sociologists alike. It was argued in the preceding Chapter that we need to choose an orientation to guide the value choices involved in sociology. On the other hand, the validity of such a value orientation is ultimately assumptive, and sociologists cannot demonstrate the validity of one orientation over another by reference to facts.[9] Thus, we are placed in the awkward position of having to choose with no adequate grounds for choice.

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[9]The type of reasoning that has led to this statement has probably led some to feel that value freedom is the only tenable position. However, this would only be the case if the arguments in the preceding Chapter - that sociology is, and most likely will continue to be, not value free, and that to the extent that it is not we must choose - are not accepted. In sum, the reasoning presented suggests that while we must choose, the grounds for our choice are not as firm as would ideally be the case.

# CHAPTER V.

## THE OPTIMIZING SOCIETY: A SUGGESTED GOAL/DECISION ORIENTATION FOR THE PROFESSION

If the preceding analysis of the sceptic's view is accepted, we are faced with what seems to be an insoluble dilemma. The profession must choose an extra-epistemic orientation in order to make the necessary evaluations of, and choices among, the numerous alternatives presented in the process of seeking and employing sociological knowledge. At the same time we recognize that any orientation that is chosen can not be proven "correct" and that its validity is ultimately assumptive. This apparent dilemma is, however, not insoluble.

The implication of the sceptic's view is not that the choice of an orientation is impossible, but rather that it must be recognized that the ultimate value of the orientation is not demonstrable or "provable" but rather is only assumptive, and that the best we can do in arguing for an orientation is to offer persuasive reasons. Since any orientation that would guide the search for an employment of sociological knowledge has implications for elements in the social structure being maintained and or changed which may or may not be valued by those who par-

ticipate in society, any such orientation at minimum carries with it at least indirect value imposition on societal members. While ChapterIII argued that a choice or orientation is necessary, Chapter IV argued sociologists have no warrant for value imposition as a result of characteristics possessed by them, be it greater intelligence, knowledge, power, etc. However, there is one orientation that might be adopted by the profession that is unique in that it may act as referent in decision making while minimizing unwarranted value imposition. While additional persuasive reasons will be offered in Chapter VII,the uniqueness of this orientation may be seen as the most persuasive of the reasons offered by those who are swayed by the sceptic's view.

It is proposed here that the guiding goal orientation for sociology should be the seeking of societies which embody social structures that optimize alternatives (or "freedom") for their members.[1] Given the preceding discussion, it is recognized at the outset that the value of the orientation is assumptive rather than demonstrable. As a result, we are in partial agreement with the

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[1]The term "freedom" here is used synomously with the phrase"optimization of alternatives" since it seems that many who use the term may imply such a usage. However, it is recognized that the term "freedom" is used at the writer's peril in that it has other common usages that are clearly excluded later in this section such as "absence of constraints."

psychologist Kelman who, while suggesting that freedom is an essential part of being human, seems to recognize that his holding of the value of freedom is assumptively based.

> ...The purpose of education and of the arrangement of the social order, as I see it, is to enable men to live in society while at the same time enhancing their freedom of choice and widening their areas of choice. I recognize as ethically ambiguous any action that limits freedom of choice, whether it be through punishment or reward or even through so perfect an arrangement of society that people do not care to choose. I cannot defend this value because it is not logically derived from anything else. I can, of course, offer supporting arguments for it...While I can offer these supporting arguments, I recognize that freedom of choice is, in the final analysis, a rock-bottom value for me (Kelman, 1965: 35).

While it may be admitted that the proposed orientation is of only assumptive validity it seems fair to demand that the reasons for adopting be persuasive. Given the sceptic's view and the difficulties it presents, a particularly persuasive reason for adopting the proposed orientation is that it uniquely mitigates those difficulties.

It was argued in the previous chapter that the correctness of all values is ultimately non-demonstrable, and that all values are of equally assumptive validity.

Further, no additional validity is conferred on those values by the power, knowledge, or other characteristics of the individual or group that possesses them. This suggests that the sociologist as well has no right to dictate values to others by virtue of greater knowledge, intelligence, or technical competence. Since a sociologist's values share the same assumptive basis as those of the rest of the population, he has no warrant for choosing an orientation which maximizes his values at the expense of the values of others. Yet sociologists have available one orientation which has the unique quality of mitigating the difficulties of unwarranted imposition of sociologists' values upon the rest of the population. This orientation is the optimization of freedom of alternatives.

More specifically, we may say that freedom is optimized when alternatives or choices are optimized, whether these alternatives be in thought, speech or action. Put more formally, it is urged that sociology adopt as its primary non-epistemic orientation: <u>the optimization of alternatives open to every individual</u>.

While reasons of lesser importance will be offered later, it is urged that this orientation be chosen in that it has the prime virtue of in fact providing an orientation which allows sociologists to make and evaluate value choices concerning the use of sociolo-

gical knowledge, while at the same time minimizing value imposition by the sociologist upon the rest of the population. The effects of unwarranted value imposition are mitigated in that the optimization of alternatives allows every individual, to the maximum degree possible, to act in accordance with his values and actualize them in the form of goals. The goal of sociology as embodied in the orientation, then, would not be to impose a specific conception of "the good" upon others, but rather to seek a social structure or social structures that optimize the alternatives open to every individual through which they can actualize their own conceptions of "the good."[2]

The remainder of this chapter will further specify the nature of the proposed orientation. ChapterVI offers a view of the basis for the choice of an orientation that

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[2]It should be pointed out that the argument here may be considered paradoxical, given the discussion in Chapter IV. While in the sceptic's view it is a "fact" that ought statements cannot gain validity from statements of facts (and that value imposition is unwarranted), the primary persuasive reason offered at this point for optimizing alternatives is this same sceptic's view of what is asserted to be a basic fact. Even if it is assumed that an argument's being paradoxical is an important criticism: (1) Chapter IV dealt with facts as a basis for demonstrating validity rather than as a basis for persuasive reasons, and more importantly, (2) if the argument is paradoxical it may be paradoxical in an unimportant or trivial sense in that it is much like faulting one for the paradox contained in the argument that "there are no absolutes." This does embody a paradox if it is stated in absolute terms but seems necessary to make the argument, and the accusation of paradox would not seem to have much bearing on the substance of the argument.

conflicts with the sceptic's view, and yet offers a different but important reason for adopting it. Chapter VI offers a view of the basis for the choice of an orientation that conflicts with the sceptic's view, and yet offers a different but important reason for adopting it. Chapter VII offers other less central reasons for adopting the orientation and suggests limitations and difficulties involved in adopting the orientation such as problems of justice or distribution, and considers the relation of this goal orientation to the goal of knowledge.

Further Clarification of the Proposed Orientation

To clarify the proposed goal or decision orientation of the optimization of alternatives open to every individual, we can first contrast it to its opposite, and second contrast it to two other conceptions of freedom.

Any time sociological knowledge is used to bring about social changes or maintain a social system in its present state, some form of manipulation or control must be employed. Kelman suggests that this is also the case for changes in individual behavior: "effective behavior change inevitably involves some degree of manipulation or control, and at least the implicit imposition of the change agent's values on the client or the person he is influencing" (1965:33). In short, some type of intervention must be made to produce the desired state which would not occur if the system were

left to its own devices. It is argued here that the orientation which minimizes the imposition of the values of the controller or manipulator, and maximizes the values of the client or person being influenced, is the optimization of alternatives open to every individual.

For comparison purposes, consider an example of behavioral manipulation in accordance with the opposite orientation - the minimization of alternatives open to every individual.

We may say that there exists a wide range of alternative environments open to every individual from which each may choose. These environments may be either social or physical. Further, an individual has open to him a wide range of alternative behavioral repertoires or sets of behavioral subroutines that correspond to any particular environment. Let us make the example more concrete by considering a simplified presentation of recreational alternatives.

In Figure 1 four alternative physical environments are suggested in which recreational behavior might occur. Also listed are seven types of recreational activities or behavioral repertoires, such as swimming. Any recreational environment has a set of behaviors which are appropriate to it while others are not. Similarly, any recreational repertoire is appropriate to certain environments and not to others. In this sense, the behavioral repertoires are "mapped" to the environments.

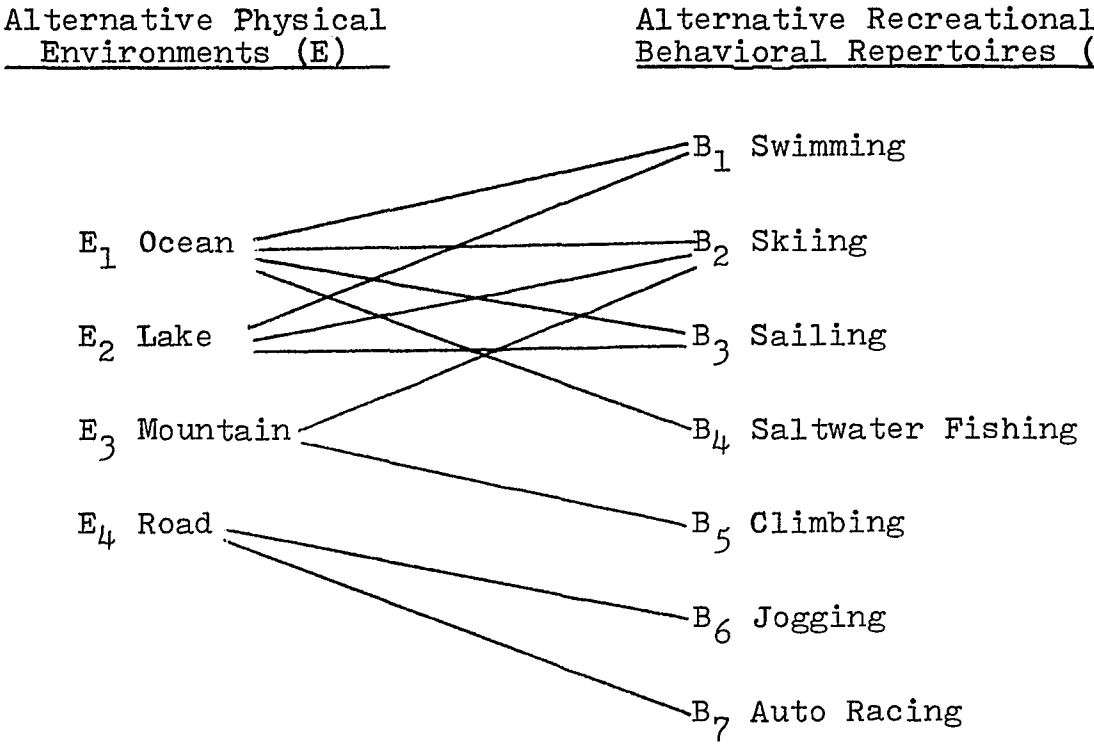


Figure 1. Example of mapped physical environments and recreational behavioral repertoires, used in explaining"optimization of alternatives" orientation.

That is, certain environments evoke or allow a certain range of behaviors, and the desire to behave in a certain way predisposes one to seek certain environments.

Now assume that a group of people place a negative value on skiing and have access to the knowledge and the resources necessary for manipulation. They could either prevent access to environments where skiing (water or snow) was possible, i.e. the ocean, lake, or mountains, or they could use that knowledge to eliminate the behavioral repertoire called skiing. Similarly, they could use the available knowledge and ability to manipulate and control that it implies to insure that positively valued recreation will occur, by eliminating the availability of other environments where that recreation does not occur, and by eliminating the other recreational behaviors that correspond to the remaining environments. In both cases, the impact of the manipulation is the minimization of open alternatives.

In general, the body of sociological knowledge can be used in this way to bring about a general decrease in alternatives. On the other hand, it can also be used for the purpose of expanding the number of alternative social environments and for the purpose of expanding the number of possible behaviors available to individuals within any given social or physical environment. Choosing to optimize the alternatives open

to every individual is choosing to optimize the values of those who act (all), rather than only those who control (the few). The most basic choice in terms of a sociological orientation is between this orientation of optimizing alternatives open to every individual, and the opposite orientation of increasing the choices and freedom of those who control while bringing about a general decrease of choice and freedom for those who act.

In terms of this choice, if the general minimization of alternatives is chosen, it makes very little difference who the manipulator is who places the actualization of his values above freedom of choice. Whether the sociologist provides the facts to <u>politicians</u> who employ these facts in imposing their values (in a "decisionist" model), or whether <u>sociologists</u> make the choice of value imposition themselves by virtue of their professional qualifications (in a "rationalist" model) (Eisele, 1971-2:101), matters very little in terms of the extent to which freedom is removed if some other value is placed above it. Whether the model is decisionist or rationalist, the imposition of values (especially from the point of view of the optimization orientation presented here) "...is completely inadequate, since decisions about human existence are made by men who are not capable of deciding them. Decision-making is kept out of the public realm. The public can do no more

than legitimize the power of decision-making elites" (Eisele, 1971-2:101). The orientation of the optimization of alternatives (and the working assumption that suggests it) assumes that those best able and most justified to make decisions about human existence are those who live that existence. The alternative chosen is to optimize the choices open to every individual, and thus freedom, rather than proposing that some select few possess values that are sufficiently justified to warrant abrogating that freedom.

Two Other Conceptions of Freedom. In addition to clarifying the orientation of optimization of freedom as the optimization of alternatives open to every individual by comparing it to its opposite, we may also contrast it to two other conceptions of freedom.

First, in the expression "optimization of freedom", the term "freedom" does not mean freedom from constraint or limits. Although the optimization of alternatives decreases the limits placed on choice, entering into society demands that any individual's behavior has limits. Any social environment, even one that optimizes alternatives, places constraints upon behavior as do physical environments. Freedom, then, is a social relationship, and not a lack of relationship.

> ...freedom emerges as a continual process of liberation, as a fight...to remain dependent...Freedom is not a solipsistic existence but a sociological action. It is not

> a condition limited to the single individual but a relationship, even though it is a relationship from the standpoint of the individual (Simmel, in Wolff, 1950:120-1).

For an individual to gain the benefits of a society which optimizes alternatives, he must enter into that society and that entrance places constraints upon him.

The society necessary to optimize alternatives open to every individual still structures and constrains behavior, in that while the range of alternatives is broadened, that range is still limited. While increasing the number of alternatives makes the society increasingly complex, the structuring of alternatives allows an organized complexity of individual behaviors, and not the chaotic "everybody doing his own thing." To summarize this point, freedom, in the sense of the ethic proposed here, is a characteristic of structured social relationships, and not an isolation of the individual from the influence of social constraints. What is urged is not individuals who are freed from constraint in their isolation, but rather societies whose social structures optimize alternatives open to all societal members.

Secondly, the term "freedom" is not meant to denote a <u>freedom to restrict</u> the alternatives open to all by an individual or group of individuals. This is the sense in which the term "freedom" is often used in rhetoric, as in: "We are free to do as we please, and

my freedom to establish a monopoly, discriminate against certain groups, etc., should not be abridged."[3] The orientation proposed here urges the optimization of alternatives open to every individual (all individuals), and in this way seeks a general optimization of freedom.

This suggests that any action designed to bring about a general optimization of alternatives may actually bring about a decrease in alternatives for some particular individual or group of individuals. Thus, for example, economic freedom might at first be seen as allowing as an alternative the carrying out of monopolistic practices. On the contrary, monopolies would not be implied by the orientation in that they eliminate both the alternatives of those who wish to enter the market as well as the alternatives of those consumers who wish to purchase within the market.[4] What is suggested is that it may be necessary to eliminate one alternative in order to bring about optimization of alternatives.[5] In short, the orientation suggests that every individual's freedom should be optimized, and that any

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[3]It may be the use of the term in this way that causes some to be hesitant to espouse freedom as a value.

[4]While it seems reasonable that monopolistic practices would bring about a general decrease rather than a general increase in alternatives, whether they actually do or not may be treated as an empirical question.

[5]This also suggests again that what is not being proposed is an absence of constraints. Constraints placed on certain behaviors or emerging relationships that generally decrease alternatives are essential to a society that would optimize them.

particular individual's freedom should be maintained up to the point that he jeopardizes the freedom of others. We may formalize what we mean by adding a rider to the orientation to the effect that while actually present areas of choice open to every individual should be widened to the greatest degree possible, they should be opened to any individual (or group) to the extent that it is compatible with equal freedom for all. With the rider added the orientation urges that individual sociologists and the discipline as a whole seek: the optimization of alternatives open to every individual compatible with equal optimization of alternatives open to all. This rider suggests that each individual's freedom should be continually increased up to the point that it begins to interfere with others' optimization of freedom.[6] This orientation then clearly suggests an optimization of freedom not for elites, or a powerless minority, or even a popular majority, but for all individuals - which includes elites, minorities, and popular majorities.

Possible Implications of the Sceptic's View for the Relation Between the Optimization of Alternatives Orientation and a Survival Orientation

Anticipating the Chapter to follow, some discussion should be given of the implications of the sceptic's view

[6]Even when not stated explicitly on the following pages, the rider may be assumed to be implicitly present.

for a possible decision or goal orientation of societal survival. It could be argued that sociology should orient its decision making by using as a referent the promotion of societal survival. That is, all decisions involved in the search for and employment of sociological knowledge should be aimed at developing and promoting the increased likelihood of societal survival. An adherent of the sceptic's view would probably argue that while most take the striving for survival for granted, the value of such striving is still non-demonstrable or assumptive. As such, it also depends on persuasive reasons for its adoption despite what may be considered the "obviousness" of the value. In that societal survival is clearly necessary to a society that optimizes alternatives, one persuasive reason for a survival orientation that might be offered is that the discipline should orient itself toward survival because this would have instrumental value. The survival of society might not be argued to be of value in itself, but rather insofar as and because it allowed the possibility of freedom.

The sceptic's view does not offer the possibility of solid grounding for the choice of an extra-epistemic orientation. The promotion of social structures that optimize alternatives is argued to be a unique goal worthy of consideration for adoption by the sociological profession. Alternative optimization is unique in that it least imposes some substantive conception of the good upon others by

widening areas of choice in which societal members may actualize their own conceptions of the good.

The Chapter to follow takes serious issue with the sceptic's view, arguing that there exists firmer footing for the choice of such an orientation, and offers a considerably different view of the assertions made in Chapter IV concerning the relation between facts and values.

# CHAPTER VI.

## THE NATURALISTIC-EVOLUTIONARY VIEW: ANOTHER POSSIBLE BASIS FOR THE CHOICE OF A GOAL OR DECISION ORIENTATION

Contradicting the "sceptic's view" there are numerous "naturalistic" positions which in various forms argue that knowledge or factual claims can serve as a basis for the making of value claims. While they disagree as to which types of facts should act as the basic referents (i.e. pleasure, desire, need, etc.) they would undoubtedly concur in rejecting any view which denied facts a central role in the justification of a goal orientation (for discussion of major naturalistic positions, see Hancock 1974: 18-40, 58-86; Adams, 1960; Perry, 1954; Frankena, 1973:96-102). All of these positions share in common some form of the view which identifies statements of what is good, obligatory or ought to be with some <u>natural</u> object or property. The term "natural" can be defined in reference to objects as "something of which the existence is admittedly an object of experience" (Moore, 1903:38). As such reference is made to objects and properties which are capable at some point in time of being verified as "facts." "If we consider whether any object is of such a nature that it may be said to exist now, to have existed, or to be about to exist, then we may know that that object is a natural object, and that nothing of which this is not true, is a natural object"

(Moore, 1903:40). Further, the reference that is made in these views to natural objects and properties is in terms of basic or highest level values rather than lower level values.

> One way of putting (the) question is to ask whether our basic ethical judgments can be justified in any way similar to those in which our factual judgments can be justified. It is therefore, by a natural impulse that many philosophers have sought to show that certain ethical judgments are actually rooted in fact, or as it used to be put, 'the nature of things'... Opponents have...countered that this cannot be done since one cannot get an Ought out of an Is or a Value out of a Fact. Now, we do sometimes seem to justify an ethical judgment by an appeal to fact. Thus, we say that a certain act is wrong because it injures someone...However, it becomes clear on a moments thought that our conclusion does not rest on our factual premise alone...We are tacitly assuming that injurious acts are wrong, which is a moral principle... In such cases, then we are not justifying our ethical judgment by reference to fact alone but also by reference to a more basic ethical premise. The question is whether our most basic ethical or value premises can be derived logically from factual ones (Frankena, 1973,96-97).

While many of the naturalistic formulations that argue for justification of most basic value premises by reference to facts are worthy of consideration, only one has been singled out for examination here. This is the evolutionary approach that has been argued forcefully by Waddington in his recent book, The Ethical Animal. This newer formulation most successfully circumvents major arguments which have been lodged against most other formulations of a naturalistic view.

Most of these numerous formulations can be roughly said to have taken one of two general approaches in their line of argument. The first general approach is to attempt to logically derive as a conclusion premises containing terms such as "good" or "ought" from other premises which do not contain them. These approaches are accused of being fallacious in that they make a leap in logic which is not acceptable according to usual practices. That is they try to argue that A = B .'. A = C, without inclusion of premises that logically connect A to C. The second general approach rather than attempting to logically derive an Ought from an Is, attempts to define the good in terms of some natural property such as "the pleasurable." This approach is argued either (1) to be circular, in that what we wish to ascertain is defined into existence and often later treated as having been demonstrated, or (2) to be begging the question, in that, for example once "good" is defined as "pleasurable" we may still ask if any particular pleasurable act is also good. This latter question can only be answered by reference to the term which we were initially trying to define. Waddington's evolutionary formulation takes neither of these approaches. As a result it may be argued that Waddington circumvents these serious criticisms.

Waddington's Naturalistic-Evolutionary View

The perspectives suggested in E. H. Waddington's The

Ethical Animal[1] offer numerous challenges to the "sceptic's view" of the basis for choosing a non-epistemic decision orientation. Had Waddington read Chapter IV of this work, he would probably begin to criticize the "sceptic's view" for implying a conception of man's reasoning about the world and his imposition of values upon it which presents man's intellect as standing apart from nature. Such implications would be criticized as misrepresenting the surrounding circumstances of life.

> The human intellect is an instrument which has been produced during the course of evolution, primarily by the agency of natural selection, supplemented by the specifically human evolutionary processes which we shall discuss later. Like all products of evolution, it has been moulded by the necessity to fit in with - or rather, to put it more actively, to cope with the rest of the natural world. Its function is not to produce a God-like vision of the human situation seen from the standpoint above and outside the turmoil of actual life (18-19).

The sceptic's view, by making inadmissible the basing of an orientation that guides and justifies choices on our knowledge of the world, sets man apart from the nature

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[1]Since Waddington's (1960) The Ethical Animal (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) will be relied upon heavily, page numbers in parentheses refer to this source. While this brief review shall attempt to convey the flavor and substance of Waddington's arguments, the reader is referred to the original to gain fuller appreciation of the richness of this scholar's insights.

which molds the intellect which chooses. It might be further argued that adherents to the sceptic's view see "a radical distinction between man and the rest of the world," viewing man as acting independently from the rest of the world and observing and acting upon something essentially foreign to himself, rather than employing faculties that are a product of evolution which are moulded by and allow man to fit into the natural world (76).

Just as Waddington would disagree with what he might see as the sceptic's view of nature, he would similarly disagree that the choice of an orientation, which embodies basic values and ethical considerations, can have only an assumptive grounding. Basic <u>facts</u> for Waddington are species' attempts to survive and species' evolution. Further, human ethical systems <u>are</u> products of, and play an important role in, human survival and evolution. As such rather than asserting that there is only an assumptive basis for the choice of ethical systems, Waddington argues "that the framework within which one can carry on a rational discussion of different systems of ethics, and make comparisons of their various merits and demerits is to be found in consideration of animal and human evolution" (23).

Waddington argues that the situation for societies is similar to that of the newborn human infant who develops into an "ethicising being" (one who "goes in" for ethics)

not wholly as a result of intrinsic forces but as a result of interaction with external circumstances. Ethical feelings and beliefs are adopted because they are functional in assuring a child's survival and promoting his relationships with others (25-27). Societal ethical systems have also evolved in the process of interaction with social and physical environments, and have survived because they have promoted societal survival and evolutionary developments. If we grant that the function of ethical beliefs is to promote survival and evolutionary development, we have a criterion for chosing between ethical systems - the extent to which they fulfill or fail to fulfill this function.

> Now, once we have assigned the functions to a general type of activity we have a rational criterion against which to judge any particular example of that activity. To say that something has a function is not merely to assign causal efficacy to it, but implies further that the causal network of which it is a part has as a whole some general character. A particular example of the activity can then be judged by how well it brings about the realization of that character.
>
> It is a criterion of this kind which we can hope to apply to human ethical beliefs. We have first to try to ascertain the general character of human evolution or, indeed of animal evolution as a whole. We have then to inquire of any particular ethical belief which comes to our attention, how effective it is in mediating this empirically ascertained course of evolutionary change (29-30).

Thus for Waddington, the choice and justification of any particular belief is how well it fulfills its functions

of promoting survival and evolution. Naturalistic views such as this have not been without critics, but Waddington's formulation is unique in its circumvention of the major thrust of these criticisms.

Waddington's Handling of the Criticisms Lodged Against Naturalistic Perspectives

As was pointed out at the beginning of this Chapter, many of the previous naturalistic formulations have attempted to logically derive ethical statements from statements of what is the case. Such attempts have been accused of making what G.E. Moore terms the "naturalistic fallacy." These refutations find their roots in the writings of Hume (especially A Treatise of Human Nature, Book 3, Part I):

> In every system of morality which I have hitherto met with, I have always remarked that the author proceeds for some time in ordinary ways of reasoning and establishes the being of a god or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surprised to find that instead of the usual copulations or propositions is, and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not concerned with an ought or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; but is however of the last consequence. For as this ought or ought not expresses some new relation of affirmation, it is necessary that it should be observed and explained; and at the same time that a reason should be given for what seems altogether inconceivable; how this new relation can be a deduction from others that are entirely different from it (Hume, in Waddington: 50-51).

This criticism that one can not legitimately deduce an ought from an is can probably be legitimately applied

to many formulations, however it does not seem applicable to Waddington's formulation. This is because he is not maintaining that the good is deducible from facts but rather that ethical systems can be chosen and justified by reference to a factual criterion - namely their functionality in promoting survival and evolution. The crucial distinction here is that Waddington is arguing that one can employ a factual cirterion in our choice of orientation, not that we deduce the ultimate value of the orientation from facts. While it is widely assumed that some high level value must be the final arbiter in such choices, Waddington argues that a supra-ethical criterion can just as readily be facts.

> However, for my major purpose the validity or otherwise of the refutation of the naturalistic fallacy is irrelevant. I wish to maintain that it is possible to discuss, and perhaps to discover, a criterion which is not of an ethical nature, but is, if you wish, of a supra-ethical character; a criterion, that is to say, which would make it possible to decide whether a certain ethical system of values is in some definite and important sense preferable to another (54-55).

Using a naturalistic-evolutionary criterion is not argued to confer upon the chosen ethical system any ultimate value. Put another way, the only "good" that can be said to be conferred upon the chosen ethical system is a "good of a kind." When we say "this is a good gun" we can say so without implying either that guns are good, or that this gun has an ultimate value. Rather we would imply that

this particular gun performs well the functions that objects of this kind are supposed to perform, namely shoot straight, have high velocity, or whatever. Similarly, we might say that the use of an evolutionary criterion does not add any ultimate value to the chosen ethical system, but rather that it is also a good of a kind - it performs well the function of ethical systems generally in that it promotes well survival and evolution.

In a similar fashion to the circumvention of the criticism of fallacious deduction, Waddington also circumvents the criticisms lodged at formulations that define the "good" in natural terms. The "definist" formulations are often accused of being circular in that they begin by defining the "good" in natural terms, and then later assert that these properties or objects are "good" and are to be valued. Waddington is not defining "good" or "right" as "more evolved," and points out that there is really no resemblance between the characteristic we have in mind when we use the terms "good" or "right" and that which we have in mind in using the term "more evolved."

> If we ask ourselves what more evolved means we should find in it, I think, two main elements: (1) that conduct so described comes in time, after a process of evolution of more or less duration, and (2) that it has as a characteristic which usually emerges in the course of evolution, that of being more complex in comparison with the simple activities which appear in an early stage of evolution and it is surely clear that neither temporal posteriority nor complexity nor the union of the two, is that which we mean to refer to when we

use the term right or obligatory (51).

And if the factual terms and value terms are not interdefined there is no grounds for accusing this evolutionary-naturalistic formulation of circularity.

What Waddington is presenting, then is a form of argument that is radically different from classical naturalistic presentations, and which as a result circumvents their difficulties. In fact, Waddington's view is sufficiently different from classical naturalistic positions that we should perhaps take note of the difference by using terms such as "quasi-naturalist"[2] or "second order naturalist" when referring to a position such as Waddington's. At the same time, we may reserve the term "naturalist" or use the phrase "first order naturalist" when referring to classical naturalists. First order naturalists normally define certain ethical terms with reference to natural terms. They do this explicitly in"definist" views, or implicitly when deducing ethical statements from factual ones (where the implicit definition is actually what allows the deduction). In either case, the use of the naturalistic definition is such that once the definition is agreed to some ultimate, substantive ethical principle follows immediately from it. The proposed ethical principle, then, is circular, or true by definition. As Brandt points out,

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[2]The term "quasi-naturalist" was presumably coined by Brandt (1973:265-267) in discussing his own "qualified attitude method" of ethical justification.

"some naturalist definitions, like the proposal that 'x is worthwhile in itself' means 'x is pleasant,' have the consequence that substantive ethical principles are true by definition (in this case 'something is worthwhile in itself if and only if it is pleasant')" (1973:266). A second order or quasi-naturalistic position, on the other hand, does not define ethical terms with reference to naturalistic ones, but rather defines naturalistically a <u>method</u> for choosing between ethical systems. Further, no important substantive ethical principles follow immediately from that method by definition. Waddington can best be considered a "quasi-naturalist." As we understand him, the novel thrust of Waddington's position is considerably different from that of earlier naturalists. A first order naturalist might have said, "by 'good' we mean 'x is that which leads to survival,'" and have concluded "x is good if it leads to survival." Waddington, in contrast, is defining naturalistically a method for choosing between statements. In particular, he is arguing that our criterion for choosing between ethical systems is the extent to which they fulfill their function of promoting survival and furthering evolution. Such a method does not automatically entail some particular substantive ethical principle. As a result of this second order or quasi-naturalistic stance, he successfully circumvents the criticisms lodged against the

first order naturalists. In fact, since a substantive good is not being defined, the criticisms, when applied to Waddington, may best be considered irrelevant, rather than incorrect.

> To a theory which attempted to discover a criterion for judging between ethical systems the refutation of the naturalistic fallacy would be largely beside the point. We should be denying Moore's contention that 'the question, how 'good' is to be defined, is the most fundamental question in all Ethics.' Instead our standpoint would be somewhat nearer to that ascribed to Kant by Broad, when he wrote: 'Kant would say, I think, that it is no more the business of ethics to provide rules of conduct than is the business of logic to provide arguments. The business of ethics is to provide a test for rules of conduct, just as it is the business of logic to provide a test for argument.' But we should be carrying the argument one step further. Where Kant was seeking to establish some particular ethical belief as a criterion by which to judge between alternative rules of conduct, we should be attempting to establish some general principle of wisdom as a criterion for judging between alternative ethical beliefs (53-54).

In short, by taking a quasi-naturalistic stance, Waddington sidesteps the major criticisms lodged against earlier naturalistic positions. Given that those fundamental criticisms have been avoided, what facts can be looked at as the criterion?

## The Naturalistic-Evolutionary Basis for the Choice Between Ethical Systems

Those maintaining an evolutionary-naturalistic view would not see the question of continued survival as one that needs justification in terms of value as the sceptic

would argue is necessary. Rather, while it might be recognized that some members of certain species and societies have not maintained attempts at continuation of existence, it would be argued that the basic fact of biological knowledge is that every known species and probably the existence of every human being has been guided by the continuation of that existence. A second,

> ...unavoidable biological fact is that of evolution. For at least the last hundred years, since Darwin wrote, biologists have had to consider all living things, including man, as being produced in such a way as to bring its results into adjustment with the circumstances surrounding it. It is by now absolutely conventional and a matter of first principles to consider the whole physiological and sensory apparatus of any living thing as a result of a process which tailors it into conformity with the situation with which the organism will have to deal. The same principle undoubtedly applies to behavioral characteristics, and there is no obvious reason to deny it out of hand in relation to intellectual and even moral characteristics in those organisms which exhibit them (72-73).

From an evolutionary-naturalistic perspective, then, these are the primary facts that should serve as a criterion in the choice and justification of a value system. In accordance with this view, an orientation should be chosen and is most justified which maximally promotes survival and evolution. In reality, evolution is not seen as a distinct criterion apart from survival, but rather the two are seen as highly interdependent. Evolution in a most

general sense is molded by and a product of survival, and evolutionary developments may be said further to generally increase the probability of survival.

Waddington also offers a more specific analysis of the biological evolutionary system with special emphasis on the genetic system (85-100), which while providing an excellent discussion of knowledge and recent insights need not concern us here. However, one recent insight will be of particular interest to social scientists. This insight is generally credited to Darlington. While it has been generally recognized by biologists that species are evolving, only recently has it come to be recognized that the genetic systems responsible for evolutionary development are <u>themselves</u> evolving. The genetic system is that whole complex of processes by which hereditary variation is brought into being and transmitted. What is being argued is that "there will be a natural selection in favor of more efficient systems which most effectively throw up hereditary variations of the kind natural selection will favor" (101). While a large number of different genetic systems have been recognized in sub-human species the most radically different appears to be the "socio-genetic" in the human evolutionary system.

While the teaching of younger members of the population by older members plays a relatively minor role in sub-human species, it plays a major role in the human species, and

many diverse modes of information transmission and reception have developed. "What we have here amounts to a new mode of hereditary transmission. It is true that this cannot transmit a new variation in our bodily structure as do the genes, but it can transmit conceptual knowledge, beliefs, feelings, aesthetic creations and other mental phenomenon together with a vast variety of non-human artifacts" (102). Dobzhansky (1956) and others, have come to agree with Darlington, Julian Huxley,and Waddington that man's development of a cultural system constitutes a mode of evolution which was previously non-existent. It is seen as a significant step in the evolution of evolutionary mechanisms, and is often referred to as the "socio-genetic" mode or system.

It is highly similar to the genetic system in some respects. At an abstract level genes can be said to be primarily transmitters of genetic information from one generation to the next. The socio-genetic mechanism also passes information to succeeding generations.

> Another writer trained in the classical doctrines of genetics, Kenneth Mather, has recently expressed the same ideas as follows: 'ideas have many of the properties we find in genes...they are transmissible, and therefore permanent in the same sense as genes, they vary and they are selected. Because they vary and are selected, the caucus of ideas and concepts on which the structure of society depends is not only capable of evolution but must evolve...this social evolution...has come to overlay and obscure the genetical variation that we see when we look within societies' (in Waddington, 1960:106).

The socio-genetic system has perhaps come to "overlay and obscure" the genetic due to important differences between the two. Socio-genetic transmission is not limited only to biological relatives, but rather information may be transmitted and received by a wide variety of societal members. Further, the information is not received "entirely or even mainly at one point in the life history of new generations." As a result, "we have, as it were, an enormous expansion and multiplication of paragenetic transmission" (113). The result is an overshadowing of the genetic system, and as a result knowledge, technology and social structures have evolved at a tremendous pace, when compared with nomadic hunting populations of the Paleolithic age, but with relatively slight changes in body structure. It should not be construed from this that the genetic system is no longer operating in man - it is; the evolutionary capabilities of each evolutionary system over time are said to differ.

What is presented then is a new system that is not argued to be merely analogous to the genetic system, but a new system of evolution that is both a product of the genetic system and continues to operate with it.

While we shall shortly consider still more explicitly the implications of the evolutionary-naturalistic perspective for the choice of an orientation, prior to that a brief

transgression is in order to suggest some of the criticisms that an adherent of the sceptic's view might advance concerning this position serving as a basis for such a choice.

Potential Criticisms of The Naturalistic-Evolutionary Position

Since major criticisms have been already advanced against the sceptic's view, it seems appropriate that potential criticisms of the naturalistic-evolutionary position be suggested. These criticisms are suggested only briefly here in that this work is not attempting to choose between these bases for the choice of orientation. Rather it assumes that even in light of the criticisms advanced toward each, that each will be sufficiently attractive to a significant number of professionals to warrant their discussion in terms of a possible orientation for sociology.

1. The first criticism that a sceptic might offer is that it is inappropriate to have as a criterion for the choice of an orientation that would guide important areas of human behavior, some fact or facts alone, uncoupled with some statement of high level values. Even if the sceptic admitted that the criterion was truly factual, and avoided the problems of fallacious or circular reasoning, it might be argued that the high level values ought still to be the final referent. Here the sceptic may doggedly ask, even of such a basic fact as existence, "but should we value it?" Even Dobzhansky, who is an acknowledged supporter of evolut-

ionary ethics[3] points out that even if we were provided with complete knowledge of the direction of human evolution,

> Just why should we take for granted that this direction, which we have not chosen, is good? The very fact that man knows that he has evolved and is evolving means that he is able to contemplate speeding up his evolution, slowing it down, stopping it all together, or changing its direction. And his increasing knowledge and understanding of evolution may enable him to translate his thoughts into reality. Despite any exhortations to the contrary, man will not permanently deny himself the right to question the wisdom of anything, including the wisdom of his evolutionary direction (Dobzhansky, 1956:129).

Thus the sceptic, insisting on the inclusion of questions of ultimate value, draws the argument back into the web of infinite regress and assumptive validity. In fairness to Waddington and others sympathetic to his position, it should be pointed out that the idea that basic values, rather than basic facts, should be the court of last appeals is probably best characterized as an arguable assertion. And while it may be asserted "that an ethical value is ex officio the overriding principle of policy, and can be judged only in terms of something which has still a higher value" (55), this need not automatically be assumed to be the case. On the other hand, the idea that certain basic facts or wisdom should act as a supra-ethical criterion

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[3]Waddington says that Dobzhansky is "perhaps the most distinguished evolutionist of today" (105).

standing above basic values is also an assertion that need not automatically be assumed to be the case. Both views are seen here as assertions in that at that level of disagreement one probably must assert his position in order to defend it.

2. The sceptic may question whether survival (in the sense of continued existence) of a species is truly problematic, or whether there are more serious threats to valued ways of existence. Man's adaptability makes serious foreseeable threats to the survival of the human species improbable. As Waddington points out:

> The recent metamorphosis in the human condition has been extraordinarily rapid. Four life times could not cover the essential transition. Man's adaptability is so great that we often fail to realize the magnitude of this change (13).

Even if tomorrow there were an all out nuclear war, undoubtedly the species would continue to exist in some form. The sceptic would argue that the question lies in the value of the form of survival.

This objection may be stated in more positive terms, that is that many of us wish to do more than survive, we wish to somehow "improve" or change in more positively valued ways. At several points Waddington explains his position by reference to an analogy of physical health (i.e. see 29-31 or 59). Thus for the nutritionist to criticize eating habits he finds out what the function of

eating is, i.e., growth or health; finds out what diets satisfy this function; and then examines the particular **diet.** What we have in Waddington's terms, is a normative criteria. We find out what is statistically normal and use this as a grounds for criticizing abnormality. "The criterion we are applying here is one of general accordance with the nature of the world as we observe it. If any individual approaches a nutritionist and says that he prefers to grow in an abnormal and unhealthy manner, the nutritionist can do no more than tell him that if he does so he will be out of step with nature" (30). The problem is that many people may wish to be "abnormal" in a positive sense, such as an athlete. A view tied to statistical normality allows no possibility of being extra-ordinary, exceptional, or transcendent. Similarly, we may wish our society to change in positively valued ways apart from a greater likelihood of continued existence. While it may be argued that the idea of evolution carries with it the idea of improvement, or change in positively valued ways apart from contribution to survival, if we shift the definition of evolution and embed more value terms within it, then we are guilty of the naturalistic fallacy discussed earlier in this chapter. In particular, the circularity of the definist position would have been incorporated. Further, the value of that value implicit in evolution would then have to be demonstrated.

3. It may be argued that since knowledge or wisdom concerning evolution are urged to be the basis for choosing and justifying the choice of an ethical system, we do, and are likely to, lack sufficient knowledge or wisdom to make such an important choice. Our knowledge of the evolutionary process in general, and human evolution in particular has passed through numerous radical changes. Yet, each stage of knowledge which was later to be discredited was as strongly believed at the time to be the "facts" as are our current notions. Consider earlier instances of evolutionary ethics. Waddington points out that:

> Herbert Spencer and others advanced theories of a "Social Darwinist" kind, involving such notions as the inevitability of progress and the application of such slogans as the survival of the fittest or the struggle for existence to human social affairs. These theories have been so completely discredited that at this time little further needs to be said about them (23).

Such "notions" were not simply put forth as the conjecture of a few, but rather were widely held, and more importantly were widely held to be "facts." The question is whether we have sufficient certainty that our knowledge and conceptual frameworks on the whole so accurately reflect actual processes, that what remains before us is a filling in of the gaps, as opposed to a major conceptual revolution. If the answer is no, do we wish to have our lives directed by such knowledge?

It should be pointed out that in one sense this is an unfair criticism. It can be argued that while numerous

decisions of application of the criterion would be affected, the fact of some kind of evolution seems unlikely to change and thus the criterion would remain at bottom unchanged. The criticism is unfair if what is being criticized is the lack of knowledge involved in the application of the criterion, for the application of any ethical system, even when chosen with high level values as the criterion, depends on knowledge of what is, was, and will be the case and would fall prey to the same criticism.

4. While the general nature of change in evolution is argued to be progressive, it is pointed out that any particular stage need not be (125-126). The decision seems to be made in large part as to whether the change at any given stage is in line with the species' "character." For example, the movement of the horse from small four-toed animals, to animals with long legs and single toes is said to involve a series of improvements in that this movement enhanced the general character or organization. In particular their basic character is to rely for survival "on their fleetness of foot to escape their enemies" (126-127). Retrospectively, this conception of the species' character makes sense. The epistemological problem is that it is arrived at retrospectively. If evolution had proceeded differently, say with horses' toes becoming claws, or hind legs developed for kicking, or its hide became increasingly tough and impenetrable we would also point to these changes as

improvements in line with a very different understanding of the species' character.

More to the point, if we truly accept the idea of evolution, there is no reason to necessarily assume that there exists some species character that starts initially and is continually refined. It seems equally reasonable to consider the possibility that each species' basic character or organization is also evolving. That is to say that each species is not so much becoming more of what it is, but is becoming more of what it is becoming. If in fact a species' character is also evolving, and we have no way of knowing it at some evolutionary "end point" (should there be one) there is a serious difficulty in changing a point of reference.

Other criticisms could be lodged against the naturalistic-evolutionary view, just as they could against the sceptic's view. It is highly unlikely that any position could be developed in this area that would be beyond criticism, and both positions have sufficient merit that one could reasonably hold either. Again, the tact taken here is not to attempt to choose between them, but rather to consider their implications for the choice of an orientation since each will likely attract a large number of adherents among sociologists. Also, the choice is not made between them for perhaps a more important reason. In the discussion of

the first cirticism concerning the choice between a highest level value and a supra-ethical fact as the final criterion in justifying an orientation, it was suggested that the disagreement was at such a basic level that it may be unreasonable and may be best considered an assertion. When the two positions are taken as wholes the same type of problem arises: that is they may be so basic that it may be impossible to get outside them to choose between them. The term "view" was chosen in describing them because they may be conceived of as world views. More particularly the two positions seem to hinge on different perceptions of being. Waddington seems to suggest this:

> The validity of Hume's argument that one cannot logically proceed from an 'Is' to an 'Ought' depends entirely on what is the content of the notion conveyed by 'Is.'If one conceives of existence as, to put it crudely, Newtonism space-time with some billiard balls flying round in it, then clearly neither 'oughts' nor 'owes' can be logically deduced. But if, to take another extreme, existence is considered as the manifestation of the nature of a beneficient Deity, quite other consequences would follow (54).

If the two positions are in fact two very different world views that embody different perceptions of ontology or metaphysics this writer is ill-equipped to suggest the mechanism by which we can choose between them. Further, while someone will undoubtedly attempt to do so, it is unclear how one can without difficulty proclaim "they are

both right".[4] At any rate, it seems worthwhile to examine the implications of the naturalistic-evolutionary perspective in terms of the choice of a goal or decision orientation as we have already done in Chapter V for the sceptic's view.

Implications of the Naturalistic-Evolutionary View for the Choice of an Orientation

From the preceding pages it has become clear that according to the naturalistic-evolutionary formulation the primary criterion for choosing an orientation is how well it fulfills its function of contributing to the survival and evolution of societies or the species.[5] In the previous chapter it was suggested that if the sceptic's view were accepted it would support the choice of an orientation of optimizing alternatives open to all individuals, or more loosely an orientation which had as its goal societies which optimize freedom, in that such an orientation mitigates the effects of unwarranted value imposition. It is suggested here that even if the radically different naturalistic-evolutionary perspective were adopted, such an optimizing orientation would still gain support. In particular it is suggested that the optimization of alternatives is congruent with the dominant features of human, and to some

[4] On the other hand, they share at least one important communality of ceasing to argue in terms of ultimate values.

[5] The exact referent of the criterion is not totally clear. It variously is suggested to be societies, the human species as a whole, and the evolution of all species as a whole.

extent non-human, evolution as we understand it, and that, all things being equal, the optimization of alternatives increases the probability of societal and species' continuing evolution and survival. Before discussing this, two possible lines of reasoning that may be worth consideration, but which will not be pursued in depth here should be briefly mentioned.

The first such line of reasoning is that if there is some dominant and discernible feature of the human species' character, it would be argued to be a desire and a love for freedom. While there would doubtless be a multitude of other candidates for this basic feature of human character a need for freedom might be plausibly argued. It might be argued in line with Kelman's (1965:35) suggestion "that the desire to choose represents a universal human need, which manifests itself under different historical circumstances (not only under conditions of oppression)." The second such argument is that if it is thought that the evolutionary course that mankind follows is unalterable (except perhaps to change the rate of speed at which we move), it could be argued that on the whole, human evolution is moving toward freedom as an end point and we should try to be consistent with it or speed it up.[6]

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[6]While such a position may take serious exception with aspects of his conception of freedom or his characterization of the dialectic, it still might be argued to be in agreement with Hegel who "considered that the history of the human race is development from less to greater freedom and from less adequate forms of freedom to freedom in its perfection." (Acton,1967:446)

Either of these positions, while arguable, would require a vast amount of research and even then would probably be exceedingly difficult to demonstrate conclusively. The lines of reasoning and evidence to follow could also not be considered conclusive, but the evidence coming from some of the most noted evolutionary scholars of today - Waddington, Dobzhansky and others - is both highly suggestive and supportive of the maximization orientation being proposed here.

Waddington starts his chapter on "The Course of Evolutionary Progress"[7] by pointing out that while the evolutionary system as a whole is such that it is characterized by an inherent tendency toward progressive improvement due to natural selection, "this does not imply that such progressive improvements always occur in every evolutionary sequence." (125) The products of evolution are at present usually considered by biologists in terms of three basic categories. Two of the terms which label these categories were coined by Rensch ("cladogenesis" and "anagenesis"), and all three were presented in taxanomic form by Julian Huxley.

> The three categories are: (1) Stasigenesis, the attainment of a biologically satisfactory condition which persists unchanged through long evolutionary periods. Striking examples are provided by such well-known cases as the Brachiopol Lingula which seems to have remained unaltered since

[7]The choice of the term "progress" is unfortunate in that its common usage has made it somewhat slippery and it often carries ideological overtones. However, we use it to remain consistent with Waddington.

> the Ordovician Period ... (2) Cladogenesis, the evolution of a diversified range of species and genera all falling within a single organizational type...The appearance of a multiplicity of, for instance, Dipteran flies, or deer, or land snails, are just a few random examples. (3) Anagenesis, the appearance of something which can be recognized as an improvement over the previously existing type. It is the concept of Anagenesis which requires the greatest attention in the present context. (i.e. explaining evolutionary progress) (126).

Waddington explains anagenesis in terms of the example of the horse (126-127). The evolution of the horse proceeded through various stages or in J.S. Huxley's terms "grades" (levels through which successive improvements have passed). The evolutionary sequence began with small four-toed animals that grazed on grasses and bushes. They evolved along with other animals that survived by grazing on grass and relying on speed to escape their enemies. "The whole group of animals, considered in relation to the needs of its mode of life, can be considered as falling within a broad general type of biological organization. Within this type of organization, a series of improvements took place during evolution" (127). Some examples are the lengthening of legs and gradual shift from four toes to one which increased running efficiency, and development of longer and stronger teeth for chewing grass. "Changes of this kind are clearly improvements in efficiency by the frame of reference given by the three general types of organization. They constitute anagenesis..." (127).

However, while this evolutionary development may be said to be an improvement for a narrow point of reference, from a wider point of view these developments may close off a larger number of patterns of evolutionary development that were open prior to these developments.

> Now, what is an improvement from a horse may very well be something quite different from another point of view. The horse's anagenesis has in fact led to a highly specialized creature with only one toe on each foot, highly fitted for carrying out any type of life but quite unable to earn its living in nature except in that specialized manner. If one considers from a long run point of view the evolution of land-living mammals in general, it becomes apparent that the course which evolution has followed in the horse group has cut it off from the possibility of following some of the lines of change that were potentially open to its remote ancestors, for instance the development of the manipulative hand. Anagenesis may therefore lead to an evolutionary dead end (127).

Thus, while certain courses of evolution may constitute improvement in a limited sense of improving immediate efficiency, from a wider point of view they may not be an improvement in that they cut off other potential lines of development which would allow further evolutionary development. Within the category of anagenesis a crucial distinction must be made in order to take this difference into account.

While Huxley has used the term "anagenesis" in a very broad way to refer to any development that can be said to be an improvement over the previous type, Rensch, who

originally coined the term, used it in a more narrow way. By the term "anagesis" Rensch meant "an improvement in grade which did not, at least to any marked degree, restrict the potentialities for future evolutionary developments" (128). Waddington suggests that we may continue to use Huxley's broader usage if we make a sub-distinction within it. "If we continue, as seems wise, to use anagenesis in the wide sense suggested by Huxley, we can distinguish two types of anagenetic change: a 'closing' type which leads to improvement with one type of biological organization but a restriction of future potentialities, and an 'opening' type which involves improvement but no noticeable restriction" (128).

Waddington offers several examples of opening anagenesis which have been produced by the genetic system. For instance, the development of a special part of the external or internal body surface to fulfill the function of respiratory exchange as was the case with the gills or the lungs carried with it no obvious limitations, and moreover opened up new possibilities for utilizing the rest of the body surface for other uses, such as protection or absorption of food materials. The primary criterion in assessing any evolutionary development as being of the opening type is whether it leads to an increase in the possibilities of evolutionary alteration rather than a restriction of them. An additional example of opening

anagenesis has occurred in the evolution of genetic systems themselves. Diploid sexual reproduction can be seen as anagenesis of the opening type in comparison to systems of self reproduction and mutation. However since the development of diploid sexual reproduction, with one exception all the more recent developments in genetic systems (i.e., unisexual or parthogenetic and hermaphrodite reproduction) have been of the closing type leading to restrictive specializations rather than opening new possibilities of advance. The only recent opening anagenesis in the evolution of genetic systems has been the evolution of the characteristically human socio-genetic system (129-131). This concept of opening anagenesis is crucial to understanding both human evolution and the modern view of evolution in general.

> It is clear that for a discussion of biological evolution in relation to man and human evolution, it is the occurrence of anagenesis which takes the center stage. Stasigenesis is in some ways a failure of evolution...If nothing but stasigenesis had happened in the organic world, the concept of evolution would never have been invented. Cladogenesis - the appearance of diversity is, of course, a real evolutionary phenomenon. The notion could indeed be taken to cover the whole of evolution if we were convinced that no anagenesis had occurred. If there are any biologists who, while accepting the notion of evolution, reject that of evolutionary progress, they must presumably consider that all the results of evolution can be placed under this heading. Such a position would, however, be a very extreme and peculiar one, so far removed from a single interpretation of the evidence that one could scarcely avoid the suspicion that anyone advancing it was doing so

> merely in order to provide grounds for some future argument. I think that all biologists who have no ulterior ends in view have always, from the time of Aristotle, agreed that one can discuss a real hierarchy or progression in the forms of the organic world (133-134).

Further, there is general agreement as to the way in which that hierarchy is arranged, at least in terms of broad categories. While introductory texts offer detailed outlines, it is generally agreed that at the bottom are bacteria and viruses, then protozoa, then sponges, then molluscs, etc., on up through insects and finally the vertebrates at the top. Within that group is clearly seen a progression from various types of fish through the amphibia to the reptiles, birds, and mammals. This hierarchy may be explained in terms of the different points of development at which opening anagenesis ceased, and closing anagenesis became dominant.

> The existence of a clear-cut hierarchy which we interpret as evolutionary anagenesis, within single groups such as anthropods, forces us to remind ourselves of the distinction between opening and closing anagenesis. Evolution from a primitive anthropod to a highly evolved insect such as a fly or a bee has undoubtedly involved the real improvement of the anthropod type of organization, but this improvement has at the same time brought with it limitations which render indefinite further improvements impossible (134). ...Similar considerations probably apply to all the major groups of the animal kingdom. In each of them evolution has produced, by anagenesis, the improvement of one particular type of biological organization, but in doing so has gradually eliminated various other possibilities. Within each group anagenesis has been in the main closing anagenesis (135).

Continuing evolution, then, demands an opening anagenesis in which structures remain open to, rather than restrict possible avenues of future development, and thus structures that do not perfect some particular form of organization. Any orientation which is to be chosen and justified on the basis of a naturalistic-evolutionary view, must be congruent with this major and basic evolutionary fact, and must function to promote evolution by promoting opening anagenesis. The naturalistic-evolutionary perspective, as advanced by Waddington, dictates that the choice of an ethical system, should be in congruence with facts about processes which promote evolutionary improvement or progress. As Waddington states, "The major point about opening anagenesis, which is important to the thesis I am advancing here [that there has been evolutionary progress] , is that it has occurred. This I take to be established by the consensus of general biological opinion" (136).

The proposed orientation requires the seeking of societies and social structures that optimize alternatives for all individual societal and species' members. Optimizing alternatives implies optimizing possibilities of choice, and thereby courses of development. The orientation was introduced by comparing it to its opposite - the minimization of alternatives. The latter orientation requires the seeking of societies which minimize alternatives in

order to establish some particular substantive conception of the "good" at the expense of alternative conceptions of the good. Such societies, so oriented, would be attempting to proceed in the direction of "the perfection of one particular type of organization." This, in turn, could be said to constitute closing anagenesis because by so doing they would not leave "open the possibility of future advance." Again the primary choice seems to be between societies that are organized in such a way as to keep open and expand avenues of development, change, and potential advance, and societies which strive to organize and develop in ways congruent with the actualization of some particular value, and in the process eliminate other potential lines of development.

Further, we know that the dominant mode of human evolutionary progress is socio-genetic. In this mode anagenetic, or improving, developments are carried out by the creation, transmission, and reception of ideas and emotions as well as non-intellectual artifacts. Widening the areas of choice open to societal members increases the avenues of divergent experience and exploration. These avenues in turn increase the probability of the creative production of new ideas, emotions, and artifacts. These new ideas can then be infused into the evolutionary development of society as a whole. The central feature to be recognized about the optimizing orientation is that in optimizing alternatives, potentiality is optimized. The

orientation values social structures that open, rather than close, possibilities to societal members.

The proposed orientation cannot be proven conclusively to be the sole orientation that meets well the criterion of promoting evolutionary advance. However, if the central feature of continued evolutionary advance is opening anagenesis, both in animal evolution in general and human evolution in particular, as seems to be suggested by biological opinion; and if this orientation will better fulfill the function of ethical systems in general of promoting evolutionary advance by promoting opening anagenesis, it may be justifiably chosen by the profession as its decision or goal orientation. While further research, thought, and debate must be devoted to the topic, our current understanding of opening anagenesis seems at this time both highly suggestive and supportive of the proposed orientation, or some form of it, which optimizes alternatives.

We may further consider the related question of whether the proposed orientation, as opposed to other orientations open to us, best increases the probability of societal (and thus species') survival. Obviously, the factors involved which lead to survival are very complex and our knowledge far from complete. Still, for the sake of addressing the question, we may hazard the hypothesis that, in general, the societies that have the highest probability of survival are those societies that have optimized alternatives open to their members.

The modern understanding of species' survival, does not see natural selection operating to favor species possessing certain innately superior characteristics, but rather must be seen in relation to the external circumstances that surround the species' life. Thus natural selection, in the modern view, is seen to favor species that can fit in with, adapt to, or, more actively, best cope with external circumstances surrounding their life.

In opposition to the optimizing orientation an argument might be presented along the following lines: (1) a given society's external circumstances, i.e., its social and physical envoronment, resource availability, etc., are of such and such a character, (2) social structures of a society oriented to a specified value best fit in, or can best cope with, these external circumstances, therefore (3) we should accept an orientation which promotes societal organization in line with this value, for (4) movement in the direction of perfection of this organization increases the probability of survival, due to the congruence of the direction of organization with the environment as it is.

If these premises are accepted, the choice of such a value orientation would be reasonable if an assumption is accepted which underlies the argument and is not made explicit. This assumption is that external circumstances are, in the main, and in their most important features,

static. However, the contrary view is that environments are not static, but rather are highly dynamic and changing in important ways. If this is the case, societies which were made more adaptive by ruling out other alternatives in order to allow one value to dominant, may become maladaptive in an environment which has changed considerably. The problems with such a specialized organization have clearly been seen in experiments on other forms of life as Dobzhansky points out. While it is true that adaptation to the environment by means of genotypic specialization is advantageous in a relatively constant environment,

> The drawback of genotypic specialization and fixation is that the possibilities of adaptation to environmental changes become severely limited. Numerous and ingenious experiments have shown that when an animal is placed in novel environments, its innate behavior loses its 'wisdom.' The animal is likely to do exactly the wrong thing, damaging its own chance of survival or that of its offspring (Dobzhansky, 1956:95).

While restricting alternatives to societal members may be more adaptive in a particular unchanging environment, these same restrictions may threaten societal survival within a changing social and physical environment if this restriction is allowed to be perfected. In contrast, the optimization of alternatives open to societal members would increase the probability that the society as a whole will have open to it behaviors and structures that remain adaptive to, and can cope with, the changing

environment. While, it may seem extreme to discuss the possibility of an end to societal or human existence, "the geological strata of the earth's crust contain fossilized remains of countless thousands of species that became extinct without issue...They became extinct mostly because natural selection made them too specialized to live in environments which were only temporary" (Dobzhansky, 1956:84).

The thrust of this chapter has been to present a view of the basis for choice of an orientation that is in many respects radically different from, and critical of, the earlier presented "sceptic's view." Even though they may represent highly divergent world views, the optimization of alternatives orientation that was originally presented as congruent with the sceptic's view is not only not rejected by adoption of the naturalistic-evolutionary view, but may be argued to be suggested and supported by that view. This is not to say that it is inconceivable that once either position was accepted some other orientation could be argued from it, but rather that the proposed orientation or some closely related form of it is sufficiently congruent with either view that it should be given strong consideration.

One final point should be made before turning to the final chapter. It could be argued that the over-riding value orientation should be the promotion of survival or evolution

rather than the optimizing orientation. Thus it would be argued that should survival and freedom conflict, survival should be valued above freedom.[8] These points should be made in this context. First, to argue that survival should be given preeminent value over freedom and the chance to choose it, transforms the position of survival from a factual criterion to be employed in the choice of high level value to a high level value itself. This would constitute a significant shift in position, and the assertion of value would remain to be justified. Second, if the argument in the present chapter is largely accepted, one need not feel compelled to choose between freedom and survival. On one hand, optimizing of alternatives may promote and be necessary for survival. On the other hand, survival seems a clear pre-requisite for freedom. Rather than being at odds with one another, both freedom and survival may imply one another. Until there is clear and compelling evidence to the contrary, we are not compelled to choose either, for the promotion of either may lead to the promotion of both.

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[8]And the debate might proceed along the lines of the debate between Sidney Hook and Bertrand Russell.

# CHAPTER VII.

## FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED OPTIMIZING ORIENTATION

Two major "persuasive reasons" for adopting the proposed goal or decision orientation of seeking social structures that optimize the alternatives open to every individual have already been presented. It has been argued that on one hand the adoption of the "sceptic's view" (the adoption and justification of any such orientation ultimately has an assumptive basis) suggests and supports the optimizing orientation in that it uniquely mitigates the difficulties of unwarranted value imposition. On the other hand the adoption of the evolutionary-naturalistic perspective (which sees a much firmer grounding in the choice of a decision orientation) also is argued to suggest and support the optimizing orientation in that it seems most congruent with the modern understanding of evolution and survival.[1] In addition to these two major reasons, five other reasons may be offered that also support the adoption of the proposed orientation.

### Other Reasons For The Adoption Of The Proposed Orientation

(1) As suggested earlier, any use of sociological

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[1] If these arguments are accepted, the proposed orientation may be said to have gained additional support in that there is likely to be a greater consensus concerning the desirability of actualizing such social structures, if the optimizing orientation is supported by both of the basic views while other orientations are supported by only one of them.

knowledge to bring about changes in behavior requires manipulation or control. If, contrary to the proposed orientation, this control is used to minimize alternatives in order to either impose or eliminate some valued state, the behavior of the controller may become similarly limited as a result. This apparent paradox may occur because, in trying to insure that only the valued behavior occurs, considerable energy must be directed toward insuring that behavior is of the valued type. All things being equal, the more the actor wishes to behave in ways contrary to the values of the controller, the more surveillance is necessary, and the more assiduously other alternatives must be blocked off. As a result, the behavior of the controller is increasingly dictated and controlled by the target population (even if there is no conscious desire by that population to do so).

(2) While it is conceivable that sociological knowledge could be gained without it, the growth of the body of sociological knowledge probably requires the participation of willing subjects and cooperation from others in gaining necessary information. Jourard (1968:3-12) argues that people are increasingly becoming less cooperative with social scientists in that they feel that their aid in the knowledge process will not only not benefit those who are cooperative, but will also be used to manipulate and control their

behavior in ways that run contrary to their values. If the proposed orientation is adopted, and if it is seen that the practice of sociology actually leads to a widening of alternatives and thus a greater probability of each person actualizing his values, willingness to participate in the knowledge process will probably increase. Sociologists and sociological knowledge will benefit from members of society correctly feeling that they will benefit by their contribution of honest questionnaire responses, time and effort in participation in experiments, and permitting access to otherwise privileged information.

(3) By accepting support from a society that enables the enterprise to continue and individual sociologists to pursue sociology as a vocation, the profession incurs an obligation to reciprocate with benefits to that society. The pleasure of attaining and appreciating sociological knowledge for itself is not likely to be a benefit to the large majority of the population, particularly as that body of knowledge becomes more complex, abstract,and removed from "common sense." However, in contributing to the optimization of freedom sociology would have satisfied its obligation to provide benefit to society by contributing to the optimization of each member's chances of actualizing their values.

(4) It was suggested in Chapter II that it is extremely difficult to argue the position that sociological knowledge is valuable for its own sake, in that no other non-epistemic value can be invoked which that knowledge would serve to actualize. If freedom is of value, and sociological knowledge is sought and used to enhance the existence of freedom, then that knowledge too is of value. The non-epistemic ethic of the optimization of freedom, then, provides a rationale for holding the value of knowledge.[2]

(5) Finally, one value that all sociologists probably hold, even those who maintain a value-free position, is freedom of inquiry. This may even be true of any scientist in that the ability of a science to advance knowledge is dependent upon the ability of a science to define its problems for itself, and not to seek the solution of problems simply because some authority defines them as important (Bendix, 1970:839). This "freedom of inquiry"which is valued by and demanded for sociologists,primarily means that the maximum possible number of alternative areas of inquiry be made open. It may quite legitimately be asked how sociologists could justify demanding for themselves the

[2]It should be pointed out that any non-epistemic metavalue, and not only the optimization of freedom, could serve to legitimate sociological knowledge, if sociological knowledge contributed to actualizing that metavalue.

optimization of alternatives in areas of prime concern to them, while not extending the demand for the optimization of alternatives to others. If sociologists are justified in seeking and maintaining their freedom, presumably freedom should be extended to all others as well - unless sociologists possess some peculiar characteristics which make them particularly worthy of freedom (which for some reason have not become generally known).

We may state this argument more positively. Given that freedom of inquiry is necessary to the growth of sociological knowledge, the proposed ethic should be held because optimizing the freedom of every individual entails the optimization of freedom of inquiry for sociologists.[3]

Before proceding, it should be reiterated that

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[3]While Kelman sees high level professional values as not being logically derivable from anything else, some of his comments may suggest other persuasive reasons. He outlines several lines of deductive argument, which he does not pursue, but which might be reformulated into additional reasons for adopting the proposed orientation.

> First, I can try to show that the desire to choose represents a universal human need, which manifests itself under different historical circumstances (not only under conditions of oppression). Second, I can point out that freedom of choice is an inescapable component of other valued states, such as love, creativity, mastery of the environment, or maximization of one's capabilities. Third, I can try to argue that valuing free individual choice is a vital protection against tyranny... (Kelman, 1965:35).

freedom is a social state, even though it is expressed in terms of individuals. As a result, the optimization of alternatives is an especially appropriate orientation for sociology. Although they must admittedly be perceived by individuals in order to truly be alternatives for those individuals, it is structural and institutional arrangements that crucially determine the range of alternatives open to individuals. A wide range of actual alternatives must inhere in the social structures of societies if freedom is not merely to be a subjectively felt self deception. While at some point the extent of present alternatives must be judged with reference to the individual societal members, the optimization of alternatives is still seen as primarily the result of and embodied in social structural arrangements. Since sociology is normally viewed as the discipline which most clearly directs its attention to societal and social structural questions, the proposed orientation seems particularly appropriate to sociology. It may be legitimately argued that many of the considerations in previous chapters were argued at a high enough level of abstraction, that this orientation or some form of it should be considered by any discipline. This may be agreed, but as long as the orientation is couched in terms of social structural characteristics rather than, say, individual awareness of open alternatives, the orientation has special relevance to sociology. In

sum, sociology is an especially appropriate discipline in which to seek the optimizing society.

Three Other Potential Orientations

Any reasonable choice between alternatives involves comparison. This is no less true in the choice of an extra-epistemic orientation for a profession such as sociology. However, as was pointed out in Chapter III, even those who were most critical of value free sociology and thus most disposed to an extra-epistemic orientation, have been more concerned with calling for a recognition of value stands that seem to be present in the field and calling for explication and justification of them, than with actually presenting and justifying their own value orientations. While such calls were argued to have been beneficial in furthering debate at the time, the lack of well presented and justified positions concerning possible orientations of course makes comparison difficult. However, three possible orientations that are variously implied in the literature may be considered for the sake of comparison.[4] Actually these three implied orientations are highly interrelated and would undoubtedly be attractive

[4]While considerable effort has been made to present these implied orientations in a strong form, stronger presentation of them could be best made by those who would advocate them, and are willing as a result to spend the time necessary to develop more detailed and sophisticated arguments. At any rate, possible weaknesses in presentation are not a result of an attempt to make the orientations easier to rule out.

to many sociologists. It is not argued that they are unattractive when held by individual sociologists. Rather, it is argued that they are less acceptable than the optimization of freedom as a dominant orientation for the profession as a whole that would guide the decisions involved in sociology, and serve as a goal for the enterprise.

Taking sides. It has been argued here that the numerous choices made by sociologists should be oriented by a certain state of affairs - namely, societies and thus social structures that optimize alternatives open to all societal members. The statements of some sociologists suggest that what the discipline should orient itself towards is not a state of affairs, but rather a particular group or class of people. The question for them is not what we should value, but who. Thus, our chosen orientation would tell us who we are for, and who we are against. In this vein, Becker (1967) titled his Presidential Address before the Society for the Study of Social Problems, "Whose Side are We On?" In Chapter II, several sociologists were quoted as not only recognizing value employment in the mainstream of sociology, but as also being highly critical of what they saw as a value orientation which suggests that they are on the side of power elites. As a result, it has been suggested that sociologists switch their allegiances, and take the side of the powerless:

> Two correctives are needed. One would entail an ideological purification, or reversal: the other would entail change in alliances so that sociologists would not serve elites but other, hitherto dominated groups (Birnbaum, 1971:734).

It is argued that sociology should most highly value the powerless, and we are asked to choose sides; presumably our choice of ethic would reflect this choice. Biblarz clearly expresses the choice that is seen as open as follows:

> The alternatives available to sociologists, then, are to continue to serve groups in power, thus using social science for the maintenance and expansion of that power, or to alter their commitment individually and collectively, and begin to use their skills to serve interests of groups without power (Biblarz, 1969:4).

The question we must ask is on what basis should we choose to optimize the interests and values of the powerless, or the powerful for that matter, or any class of people at all at the expense of all others? What characteristic is there that inheres in any particular group that should make their interests and values are over-riding concern? It was argued in Chapter IV that we must assume that there is no characteristic of individuals or groups that would confer special validity on the values they happen to possess. Further, it may be argued that since sociology is ultimately supported and maintained by all of society, an obligation is incurred to produce benefit for <u>all</u>

of its members. Thus, it has been proposed that freedom be optimized for every individual, and not only for some chosen group. It is admitted that a given particular empirical situation may dictate that in order to bring about a general increase in freedom for all individuals, the freedom of a group of individuals in some areas might have to be curtailed, and thus in a specific case the orientation may dictate "taking sides." However, this in no way implies that we would always take the same sides, or even that we should value taking sides over optimizing freedom for all.

Equality. If we temporarily put the taking of sides aside, we may state what would likely be the orientation of those who would choose the powerless in a more universal way. This orientation would be the elimination of inequality, or more positively, equality. Freedom and equality are sometimes viewed as values that are at odds with each other. However, this is true only if one takes the view (which was shown earlier to be antithetical to the proposed orientation of optimizing alternatives for every individual) that freedom includes the right to abrogate the freedom of others, to repress them, or to reduce their alternatives. In point of fact, not only is equality closely related to any proposed freedom ethic, but also a high degree of equality is necessary for attaining the proposed optimizing society. This is because gross inequality pre-

cludes the existence of substantial and meaningful alternatives being open to every individual. The freedom to choose between a Ford and a Cadillac is more illusory than real, and presents no alternative of substance, if the social structure is arranged so that many cannot afford even a bicycle.

While a high degree of equality is probably necessary for the optimization of freedom, it is not sufficient. All may be equally unfree. Equality in the possession of resources, both social and physical, does not guarantee that those resources have been used to optimize freedom. If equality is not sought in order to bring about the alternatives necessary to optimize the chances that every individual's values will be actualized, it must be asked just what end it does serve. Further, if there is some other end that equality is sought to serve, it must be asked why that end is of greater value than freedom. It is argued here that equality may be viewed as a subgoal to the primary goal of optimization of freedom, and every effort to bring about equality should be evaluated on the basis of whether it in fact leads to a general increase of freedom. Conceived in this way, equality is not sought because it is a viable ethical alternative to freedom, but because a high degree of equality is a necessary characteristic of a society in which there exists the optimization of freedom for every individual.

The Elimination of Suffering. The final alternative shares features of the preceding two. In the matter of taking sides, Alvin Gouldner makes explicit why he chooses the powerless or the "underdog."

> I have acknowledged a sympathy with the underdog and with impulses to conduct researches from his standpoint. Yet in searching for the justification of my sentiments I must also candidly confess that I see no special virtue in those who are lacking power and authority, just as I see no special virtue that inheres in those who possess power and authority. It seems to me that neither weakness nor power are values that deserve to be prized.
>
> The essential point about the underdog is that he suffers and that his suffering is naked and visible. It is this that makes and should make a compelling demand on us. What makes his standpoint deserving of special consideration, what makes him worthy of sympathy, is that he suffers (Gouldner, 1968:105).

On the basis of Mr. Gouldner's contention we would presumably choose an orientation that would demand the elimination of unavoidable suffering for the powerless. This orientation is extremely difficult to reasonably refute because sympathy for those who suffer is an emotional state which most of us share. More importantly, it is difficult to reasonably refute because it is based purely on an emotional state of sympathy and we have no logic that allows us to choose between orientations based on this emotional state and others, such as love, or hate, or bliss, or whatever. Yet still we may try to show that this is not the best possible orientation, and this refutation of a suffering orientation follows the lines of argument

already presented.

First, choosing this orientation that is directed only at one group (the powerless) is unwarranted. Ann Davis suggests: "most men suffer" (1968:304). Gouldner seems also to recognize that others besides the powerless suffer as well, but his apparent reasons for directing his "sympathy" and "loving consideration" primarily at the powerless seems contradictory. The powerless especially deserve our sympathy because their "suffering is naked and visible" (1968:105). and because their "suffering is less likely to be known." Regardless of which is the case, it is unclear how the obviousness or the hiddeness of one group's suffering makes it especially deserving of our attention and concern.

Even if we state the orientation more generally (and from the present point of view less objectionably), that the avoidable suffering of <u>all</u> men should be eliminated, we still would not have chosen the best possible orientation. If he thought about it, Mr. Gouldner (and most of the rest of us) would probably recognize that what really bothers him **is** those who suffer <u>and</u> who have not chosen to suffer.[5] Yet if we make the elimination of avoidable

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[5]Gouldner (1968:106) himself makes a related distinction between unavoidable and avoidable suffering.

suffering our highest value, we would have to eliminate also the alternative of individuals intentionally choosing to suffer, as do long distance runners, and even prohibit the choice to suffer of those (such as Jesus) who believe that they must and they ought to suffer. This orientation would further eliminate the possibility of choosing to take calculated risks in that they may lead either to a substantial good or to suffering. When suffering is freely and knowingly chosen it is not worthy of our sympathy. What is worthy of our sympathy is when persons have no alternative but to suffer, and we have at our disposal, or do not seek, the knowledge necessary to allow them to avoid suffering. The optimization of alternatives seeks at once to maximize the possibilities of avoiding suffering, and yet does not prohibit the free choice of suffering by some individuals in the service of some individually held higher order value.

Sociological Knowledge and Freedom

Even if sociologists agree to adopt the optimization of freedom as their non-epistemic orientation, this adoption does not imply its relationship to what has been recognized as the professions most basic epistemic orientation - an orientation towards "truth." Freedom could variously be viewed as an orientation which should be given precedence over knowledge, be subordinate to knowledge, or share a co-equal status with knowledge. While some may

feel it necessary to choose between the first of these two possibilities, and insist upon the pre-eminence of knowledge or freedom, we do not feel so compelled.

It is admitted that in some particular situations some individual sociologists may correctly feel compelled to choose one over the other (for example, in a social situation in which power was normally used in a way that would indicate that a certain type of knowledge, if sought and obtained, will most likely be used to bring about a decrease in alternatives). However, even if such personal choices must be made from time to time, this does not indicate that the profession needs to determine some eternal priority. Neither we nor the profession are forced to make a choice in that only does the adoption of an orientation of either knowledge of freedom not preclude the other, each orientation may be instrumental in actualizing the values embodied in the other.

Freedom and "Truth." Three possible lines of reasoning might be offered by one who wishes to show that the adoption of the optimization orientation would lead sociologists away from the "Truth", and thus would preclude attainment of the profession's knowledge goals. These along with suggested refutations are presented below.

(1) "Coherence." It may be argued that seeking knowledge which is relevant to any values, freedom included, may lead sociology away from truth in that the search for relevant knowledge may remove from the body

of knowledge a coherence or unity which is allowed when the body itself solely dictates the search for knowledge.

> Demands for an exclusive priority of social relevance in research and curriculum places a limitation on the consistency and coherence of sociological thought and, therefore, on the development of the discipline. If the choice of problems is guided by extra-disciplinary concerns, and if it is connected to a succession of political and moral issues in society, and if there is acceleration of social change, then research efforts will become fragmented and knowledge will cease to be cummulative (Silvers, 1969:59).

This criticism would apply to the optimizing orientation only if that orientation entailed the "exclusive priority of social relevance," which as we shall see shortly (3) it does not. Also, this criticism assumes that for a body of knowledge to be at all relevant to an extra-epistemic value, it must be relevant to every fleeting social concern. The proposed orientation is of lasting value, and is not a fleeting concern. Contrary to the criticism, if the orientation of freedom were adopted by generations of sociologists, it would provide an additional extra-epistemic unity and coherence to the body of research aimed at its attainment.

(2) "Objectivity." It may be argued that holding an orientation of the general optimization of alternatives may preclude truth in that it would not allow sociologists to be "objective."

The refutation of this argument is made difficult since the term "objective" is ambiguous. As Rudner

(1966:74-75) points out, the term "objectivity" may be taken as the opposite of "subjective." In this sense, "subjective" and "objective" mean something similar to "psychological" and "non-psychological." This is quite different from "objective" as "unbiased" or "tending to be free from error." "No one has ever demonstrated that psychological, per se, is identical with the biased; nor is it easy to imagine how a cogent demonstration of this could possibly proceed" (Rudner, 1966:74). Since we would not want to assume that any subjectively arrived at knowledge is necessarily invalid, "objective" as the opposite of subjective is probably not an adequate way to define the term.[6]

"Dictionary definitions of 'objective' are stated in terms like 'existing independent of the mind,' or 'external to the mind' and so forth" (Taylor, 1968:302). These definitions are also inadequate in that while "truth" may exist outside the mind, our knowledge of it certainly cannot exist without a mind. However, we would like our knowledge to have a close correspondence to the truth, so we might modify the definition of "objective" knowledge to "external to the mind that initially discovers it." This suggests that others could repeat our methods and arrive at the same know-

[6]Such a definition of "objectivity" would also rule out the possibility of "intersubjective certifiability" which is necessary to many types of research such as disaster research and participant observation.

ledge - "objective" knowledge would allow what Gouldner (1968:113) calls "transpersonal replicability." Herbert Feigel argues for this usage of the term, saying that the fundamental requirement of objectivity of science is "...that the knowledge claims of science be in principle capable of the test...on the part of any person properly equipped with the intelligence and the technical devices of observation or experimentation" (in Vrga, 1971:243).

Thus, objective knowledge is derived from an objective method, and an objective method is that which others can repeat and yield the same results. However, this transpersonal replicability is no guarantee of lack of bias or lack of error. Methods may be highly biased and yet if they are well explicated can be duplicated by anyone with the same results - i.e. lead to the same error.

Taylor (1968) in a circular fashion seems to conclude that an objective method is a method that scientists agree will yield knowledge. This is an inadequate definition in that scientists may agree to a highly biased method. More importantly, "objective" methods must be distinguished from methods that are believed to yield knowledge in that the whole reason for talking about objective methods in the first place is that whether or not they are objective is helpful in <u>deciding</u> whether or not the methods are likely to

lead to knowledge.

The term "objectivity" may be too hopelessly ambiguous to allow it to be a very useful concept. However, the concern that holding some strongly felt value may lead sociology away from truth is potentially significant enough to warrant a reply. Thus, for the purpose of this discussion, we must accept some usage of the term even if it is too crude for discussion by philosophers of science. The problem with the previous definitions may be that the most fruitful referent of objectivity is neither methods nor knowledge, but rather an attitude in selecting methods and seeking knowledge. An attitude or objectivity is one that seeks to eliminate bias wherever possible, and to the maximum degree allows the empirical world to object if we mininterpret it. The prime virtue of the value free position lies not in its conclusion about the ends to which knowledge should be used, but rather in embodying this attitude concerning the way knowledge should be sought. Holding the proposed orientation in no way works in opposition to this objective attitude toward seeking knowledge. While valuing the optimization of freedom may dispose us to seek knowledge in some areas rather than others, it disposes us neither to discover a high degree of alternatives that do not exist, nor to ignore alternatives that do exist. Further, there is little

reason to think that holding the optimization orientation will negate objectivity, even if one of the previous definitions is employed.[7,8]

(3) "Basic Research." It may be argued that holding such a non-epistemic decision orientation may lead sociology from knowledge, in that if the orientation were strongly held, the value placed on research that was directly related to optimization would be so high as to prohibit "pure" or "basic" research. Such basic research, while necessary to attainment of knowledge of the workings of society, might not be viewed (at that time) as relevant

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[7]This is not to say that adopting the optimization orientation would not change the shape of the body of sociological knowledge. Since it would imply a preference for certain areas of inquiry over others, the body of knowledge would undoubtedly differ from the body of knowledge had not the orientation been chosen. While the adoption of the optimization orientation may lead to certain areas being chosen for inquiry, it would in no way imply a non-objective inquiry in these areas or a less satisfactory knowledge of them.

[8]While the validity of such an assertion may be difficult to assess, it may be that the proposed orientation of general optimization is less biasing than other alternatives, especially those which demand personal involvement with one group to the exclusion of others. Kulgen states:

> The dangers of personal involvement are obvious. They are perhaps the dangers which those who advocate value-free objectivity in science have in mind. Problems of one's group may become more important than the problems of sociology. One's interests, focused in particular loyalties, hopes, and antagonisms, are a source of bias. They dispose one to view evidence selectively and accept arguments which one wants to be true (1970:187).

to the optimization of alternatives. This argument, however, would be mistaken in two ways. First, the optimization of alternatives for every individual entails the optimization of alternatives in sociological inquiry. Thus, the sociological researcher would in no way be prohibited from doing basic research, although his holding of the orientation would imply that he make the implications of basic research for freedom known as they become clear. Second, the process of answering questions that seem directly applicable to the optimization of freedom may require basic research which may not seem directly applicable. This is often the case when a social scientist deals with practical problems related to actualizing valued ends.

> A social scientist who undertakes to work on a practical problem...quickly finds that the popular or 'common sense' statement of the problem is either incomplete or misleading: that 'the problem is really many problems...The social scientist gets driven back to more fundamental questions that bear less and less resemblance to the practical problem until they appear to be irrelevant; furthermore, some of these fundamental questions raised in this way take on a life of their own and become genuinely dissociated from practical problems' (Reicken, in Beal, 1969:67).

In none of the ways enumerated above does holding the proposed orientation necessarily or with significant likelihood mitigate against the attainment of "truth." On the contrary, earlier in this chapter (in "Other Reasons for Adoption of the Proposed Orientation") it was

seen that holding the freedom orientation may in fact be very important for holding and actualizing the epistemic orientation. Specifically, holding the optimization of freedom orientation: (a) increases the probability of the cooperation of the population at large in the knowledge gathering process, (b) fulfills the obligation to provide benefits to the population which provides the support necessary to engage in the knowledge process, (c) provides a justification for the profession's holding of the knowledge orientation, and (d) by directing and evaluating the profession's activity in the direction of general optimization of freedom, helps insure its own freedom of inquiry which is necessary in actualizing its goal of truth.

Knowledge and Freedom. Just as a goal of freedom need not work against a goal of knowledge, the goal of knowledge need not work against a goal of freedom.

It might be argued that valuing and seeking knowledge may work against freedom in that the resulting sociological knowledge could be used to minimize as well as optimize alternatives. This could occur. It is least likely to occur when the knowledge orientation is held in conjunction with the orientation of a general optimization of alternatives. While the specific means chosen by sociologists in actualizing freedom are not dictated by the orientation, as will be seen in the discussion

to follow, making and evaluating the necessary choices with reference to the freedom orientation is clearly more likely to bring about freedom than not making them on that basis. One choice that seems to be implied by the optimization of alternatives is that sociologists should attempt to insure that sociological knowledge be disseminated to the widest possible public and not simply maintained within the hands of the profession or distributed to a select few. First, wide dissemination of sociological knowledge is necessary for individuals must be aware of the alternatives that are or could be open to them if they are to take advantage of them in actualizing their values. This dissemination has not occurred, however, and this perhaps has been due to an attitude characteristic of all intellectuals and not just sociologists.

> ...The number of 'intellectuals' has become prodigious. The more the numbers have swelled, the more the members of this category are presumed to have in their keeping possessions of an esoteric nature from which the general public is excluded. Our friends outside the guild, as well as other persons we meet more casually, take it for granted that we have arrived at knowledge that they cannot understand. Gertrude Stein, who used to be charged with unintelligibility, once said that she was writing for herself and strangers. We resemble herself except that we omit the strangers (Nef, 1969:6).

It should be pointed out in fairness to social scientists that the media have not themselves been

very anxious to aid in the necessary dissemination of social scientific knowledge that may be useful in bringing about a widening in the range of general alternatives. Yet this wider dissemination is important for an additional reason. If sociological knowledge is not to be used only to control the social structure so as to minimize alternatives open to the wider public, the public must also possess this knowledge in order to be aware of and help prevent control which is contrary to their values. This case would be similar to that when knowledge used by advertisers to persuade consumers, becomes increasingly less effective as consumers also gain that knowledge.

> The increased knowledge benefits not only the persuader but also the target of persuasion. As the persuaders become more sophisticated, so do the people to be persuaded. One way of reading the history of the development of techniques of persuasion is that persuaders have been in a race to keep abreast of the developing resistance of the people to be persuaded (Bauer, 1968:264).

While a wide dissemination is necessary for insuring that there is not a general minimization of alternatives, this dissemination will not always be an easy task. However, if competent popularization of sociological knowledge is encouraged, and if recent trends toward mediating periodicals (such as Society

and Behavior Today) and increasing interest by the mass media continue, such dissemination would be possible.

General dissemination of sociological knowledge is just one example of how the conjunction of the orientation of freedom and the orientation of knowledge will increase the likelihood that sociological knowledge will not be used to minimize freedom.

Further, seeking knowledge may not only be said not to decrease the chances of actualizing the goal of the optimization of alternatives open to all societal members. On the simplest level, individuals need knowledge to both recognize and make use of alternatives. More important is the fact that sociological knowledge is necessary to transform objective social institutions in ways that optimize alternatives open to societal members. In short, the actualization of the optimizing society demands sound and fundamental sociological knowledge.

The proposed optimization orientation and the profession's current epistemic orientation of truth do not seem to seriously or necessarily work against each other. More importantly, holding either orientation seems to have at minimum an instrumental value in actualizing the other, and the holding of either may in fact necessitate the holding of both. As a result, until the profession is presented with convincing arguments and evidence to the contrary, sociology does not seem forced

to choose between its epistemic and non-epistemic orientations, but rather can allow them to operate interdependently, and confer upon them co-equal status.

Limitations of the Proposed Orientation

The goal or decision orientation that has been put forth here can be criticized on at least two general levels even if the bulk of the argument to this point has been accepted. First, it may be argued that there is no need for a goal orientation that would guide the decision making that is likely to take place in sociology. Second, it may be argued that the proposed orientation needs further specification.

The Need for an Orientation. Even if it was concluded on the basis of reading ChapterIII that some choice between non-epistemic values is necessary, and that the value free position was neither descriptively nor proscriptively adequate, it still might be argued that no over-riding orientation such as the one proposed is necessary. The argument supporting this criticism may be advanced in one of two forms. First, the forgoing analysis may be criticized on the grounds that what the discipline needs is not an over-riding goal orientation but a proper mixture of numerous high level values (such as cooperation, peace, harmony, beauty, protection from harm, justice, or whatever). In accordance with this view, the optimization of alternatives would not take the position of an over-riding goal orientation but would just be another

high level value to be balanced with numerous other high level values. However, even if it is granted that a large number of high level values may be chosen by the profession to be actualized, this does not eliminate the need for an over-riding highest level orientation. Once a number of high level values have been chosen there are innumerable possible mixes or arrangements of those values in relation to one another. Further, in seeking an acceptable mix, some values will likely be found in conflict as to which should be given primacy, or may be incompatible in certain situations. The choice and justification of a particular arrangement of high level values, then, demand an orientation that is placed above them. Thus, even if we agree that a number of high level values will be chosen, the profession is still faced with the choice of an over-riding orientation that makes possible their arrangement.

The second form that this criticism (that there is no need for the profession to adopt the optimizing orientation) may take, is that there already exists basic agreement as to the state of affairs that should be sought, and that major disagreement that exists centers around the means of actualizing that valued state. Along these lines, it might be argued that all major thinkers from the earliest times to the present and in all cultures have sought freedom, but have primarily disagreed as to the

means for obtaining it. Thus the concerns expressed in this work are misplaced. In consideration of this potential criticism, several points may be made. First, this work in no way attempts to make such foolhardy claims as that "freedom" is somehow a novel notion or only recently claimed to be a valued state. It may be further admitted that the seeking of freedom conceived of in ways similar to the conceptions presented here has been embodied in the works of numerous scholars and in the actions of countless others. We may go still further and say that an orientation such as the one proposed here probably implicitly underlies numerous proposals for other valued states. In fact such a high degree of basic agreement probably exists for such a proposed orientation, even where not explicitly recognized, that the orientation's soundness may be said to gain support. Numerous reasoning processes and independent judgments occurring within the framework of a wide variety of social and historical contexts suggest the soundness of the orientation. However, recognizing all of this does not imply universal support for an orientation that optimizes alternatives open to all individuals. Clearly, there are countless examples in history of those who have argued and/or acted on the basis of some perceived innate superiority of their races and groups in justifying the

optimization of alternatives open for their races and groups while minimizing alternatives open to others. Still others have argued that what should be sought is the accumulation of power, self-interest, or military might at the expense of freedom, often without even the misleading rhetoric that the temporary loss of freedom to societal members that such goals entail would lead to presumed general widening of areas of choice at some later date. Further, even those who have in their discussions used the term freedom have often held conceptions of it which are clearly different from the one expressed in Chapter V. For example, calls not to meddle with the "free enterprise system" made by monopolistic corporate heads clearly involve two conceptions of freedom that were expressly ruled out in Chapter V - freedom from constraints and freedom to abridge the freedom of others. Also, three alternative orientations suggested earlier in this chapter which were said to be implied by the sociological literature could be persuasibly argued to be worthwhile candidates for the profession's adoption Presumably, others will also be suggested. In short, while there would hopefully be considerable support for the proposed orientation there is no reason to assume that this support would approach universality and that we need only discuss means.

Moreover, it also seems reasonable that valued end-states must be generally and explicitly agreed upon, be-

fore we can most fruitfully discuss the means of their attainment. Finally, while we disagree with the premise that underlies this potential criticism, let us for the sake of argument grant for the moment that there is near universal agreement as to the advisability of the proposed orientation. If this is the case the worst this work can be accused of is redundancy. And if there is such basic agreement as to an orientation, there are no apparent problems, and undoubtedly some benefits, in making this orientation explicit. Further, the discussion has hopefully at least added some clarity to the nature of the orientation as well as to possible bases for its choice and justification.

The Need for Further Specification of the Proposed Orientation. Given that there is a need for an overriding orientation, the proposed orientation may be criticized at several levels all of which would suggest that it needs still further specification. The idea of the optimization of alternatives open to every individual, while clarified elsewhere as well, has been primarily specified within the context of its initial presentation in Chapter V. While change toward any valued end was seen as demanding the use of knowledge to control it, the orientation represented a different use of control than would be the case in attempting to actualize other values. While more adequate explanations have already

been given there, the optimization orientation seeks societies and social structures which expand the behavioral repertoires and environments available to societal members, rather than minimize them in order to establish some particular substantive value. The orientation was further clarified as to what is being proposed, and what is more what is not being proposed. In particular, "freedom from constraints" was seen not to be implied in that the development of social structures necessary to optimization of freedom demands acceptance of certain rights and obligations that societal membership necessitates. Further, the orientation was clarified in terms of its exclusion of freedom to abridge the freedom of others, or in other words to demand further constraints on behaviors and structures which while bringing about an increase in alternatives for the few is accompanied by a general narrowing of areas of choice open to all. The primary hope in this context is that the orientation has been put forward clearly enough that those considering it for adoption may be able to consider how the orientation as stated, or in some form consistent with it, compares to other competing alternative orientations (such as choosing to maximize some other particular value by minimizing other alternatives and simultaneously abridging societal members' right to choose it). While the general

notion may be clear, some may still ask that the orientation be further specified in different ways before they commit themselves to it. In some respects, such a request, and the criticism implicit within it, may be quite reasonable and several points should be made concerning it.

(1) While in certain areas further specification which would make the orientation a clear referent in decision making may be legitimately requested, no adequate orientation could probably be so specific as to in essence make all of our decisions for us, and to ask the proposed orientation to do so is clearly unfair. While reference to the orientation should allow the possibility of making many important decisions, it can in no way eliminate the continuing need for thought, research, debate, and considered judgment.

(2) Although it is generally assumed that greater specificity in any formulation is a virtue, this need not always be the case. If an orientation is to operate at a basic level in covering wide areas of human affairs and is expected to be useful over a considerable period of time, increasing specificity may be too unduly restrictive to allow it to perform in this manner. Waddington argues in this way pointing out that while it may be charged that his approach is so general that in practice it becomes useless, this charge can similarly be made of any important ethical formulation. Moreover,

> No general ethical principle can be useful unless it is wide enough to be relevant to very many diverse aspects of life; and that implies that it cannot be precise enough to obviate the need for debate about particular moral issues (Waddington, 1968:31).

(3) In one special sense, the orientation's lack of specificity may be said to be responsible for its uniqueness and to constitute its prime virtue. It was pointed out earlier that one reason that the term "orientation" was employed rather than the term "ethic" is that the term "ethic" when usually employed in philosophy carries with it a greater specificity and entails a particular form of presentation. Since it is truly a general orientation that is being sought here, the term "orientation" seems more appropriate and avoids adding ambiguity to what others have attempted to maintain as a precise usage of the term "ethic." Further, an "ethic" is normally understood to embody a conception of a "subjective" good. In one sense, it could be said that the proposed orientation embodies a substantive good, in that societies are sought and valued which optimize alternatives open to societal members. However, more generally, the orientation could be said not to embody a statement of substantive good, in that it urges that the extent to which alternatives exist be widened but in most cases does not tell us what choices are to be

made within this widened choice of alternatives. It is this lack of specification of a particular substantive good which allows the orientation to simultaneously be argued to mitigate the difficulties of unwarranted value imposition, and to promote evolutionary improvement by not allowing a particular value to dominate the development of the social structure and by keeping alternative courses of of development open. In this special sense, the orientation's lack of specificity in terms of specifying a substantive good, may be considered its prime virtue. As a result, however, it must remain silent about many important areas of choice.

(4) It may however still be legitimately argued that further specification is needed in two important areas. It is recognized that further thought and debate is needed in these areas, and it is hoped that others who are in general agreement with the orientation would participate in this further specification.

It may be agreed that the means and strategies for actualizing societies that optimize alternatives are important and difficult topics that need discussion. The orientation proposed does not specify what means should be adopted in actualizing freedom - whether to actively seek to bring about changes or merely to monitor the use of knowledge in light of the orientation or to use any of a wide variety of means. However, it could be used in evaluating means in that some would seem most likely to

be successful while others only promise a general optimization of freedom while actually minimizing it (i.e. those that falsely request people to "give up these few freedoms in order that your freedom may be protected"). However, no over-riding orientations, when conceived of as over-riding goals, can dictate the means of their attainment, but they can guide the choice.[9] For example, Kelman suggests some specific means that may be implied by adopting an orientation toward freedom of choice (see Table 1). It may be argued that these are not the best possible approaches the sociologist might take in trying to actualize the optimization of freedom orientation. These particular means may not be considered to involve enough active participation in bringing about fundamental changes in social structures. While choosing such an orientation does not dictate the choice of particular means and does leave them open to debate, the orientation makes possible such a choice by acting as a referent for the debate.

(5) Finally, it may be argued that the orientation as it is currently stated needs further specification in terms of the ultimate state of affairs that is being sought. Here it may be said that while a general con-

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[9]Sociologists have often told the public: "If you tell me your values, I will tell you what they imply and how to actualize them" (see pp. 31-33). Presumably they are capable of doing the same for sociologists.

Table 1.

Some Possible Means for Social Scientists to Actualize the Maximization of Alternatives Orientation (Adapted from Kelman, 1965:41)

| Desirable Steps | Role of Practitioner | Role of Applied Researcher | Role of Basic Researcher |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) Increasing awareness of manipulation | Labelling own values to self and clients; allowing client to "talk back" | Evaluating Organization that will use findings; considering on whom, how, and in what context they will be used | Predicting probabilities of different uses of research product, given existing socio-historical context |
| (2) Building protection against or resistance to manipulation into the process | Minimizing own values and maximizing client's values as dominant criteria for change | Helping target group to protect its interests and resist encroachments on its freedom | Studying processes of resistance to control, and communicating findings to the public |
| (3) Setting enhancement of freedom of choice as a positive goal | Using professional skills and relationship to increase client's range of choices and ability to choose | Promoting opportunities for increased choice on part of target group as integral features of the planned change | Studying conditions for enhancement of freedom of choice and maximization of individual values |

ception of the type of social structures and societies has been offered, further specification is necessary, and this presents an additional area for future thought and debate.

The orientation as proposed does not delineate specific social situations, structures, and systems to be valued. While the orientation does not itself delineate these, it does allow the possibility of choice between them. The optimization of freedom, for example, may suggest changes within a society in laws that produce crimes without victims, opening of alternatives for minorities, re-allocation of resources, etc. Further, it may suggest that on a more global level the population be reduced to generally increase alternatives, or that individuals be allowed to move freely between social systems. While a lasting orientation may guide and be used in evaluating the choices of valued states by generations, it cannot dictate which states will eternally constitute the optimization of alternatives (or in which areas optimization should be sought first). Our conception of the optimum possible range of alternatives is dependent both on our knowledge of the current range of alternatives and on the predictions based on the current body of knowledge of how various manipulations of the social structure would influence that range. Thus, our specific choices would be tied not only to

the orientation, but also to the changing state of the body of knowledge. If the proposed orientation were agreed upon, these specific choices would undoubtedly be the subject of difficult debate, research, and interpretation.

At a more general level, further clarification of general features of the optimizing society demand attention and debate. For example, consideration must be given as to the areas in which the widening of alternatives needs priority. One particularly general feature of the optimizing society that needs further specification is what might be termed the "system of distribution." In particular, a question needs to be further addressed as to how to bring about the optimization of alternatives open to <u>every individual</u>. Phrases like "every individual," "all societal members," were chosen in that what is sought is social structures that bring about general optimization for all rather than on one hand a popular majority at the expense of a minority, or on the other hand some elite. However, the choice of such phrases as "all" or "every" raises important issues concerning how rights, duties, and advantages are to be distributed such that this may occur. This constitutes another area in which work needs to be done by those inclined to adopt the proposed orientation.

Those joining in such an effort would find especially useful and suggestive a recent work on such problems of

distribution. This work is A Theory of Justice by John Rawls (1971). While it is beyond the scope of this work to adequately consider Rawls' insights and those of his critics, Rawls' work may be said to suggest types of thinking that may be fruitfully explored, and would seem highly consistent with the main thrust of the proposed optimization orientation. He recognizes that an institutional level the most just system may also demand a certain amount of inequality. For him the most just or "fair" system may be said to consist of two principles which are justified in terms of a contractualist framework. The first principle deals with the distributing of rights and obligations, while the second deals with the distribution of advantages.[10]

> First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty comparable with a similar liberty for others.
>
> Second: social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage, and (b) attached to positions and offices open to all (Rawls, 1971:60).

Thus Rawls recognizes that any distributive systems must probably have within them inequalities, but whatever inequalities within them must be justified by their leading to advantages that the least advantaged in society would not accrue otherwise.[11] Development of criteria such as

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[10]These principles are offered in a modified and finalized form elsewhere in sections 45 and 39 in Rawls (1971) but are introduced and largely explained in Chapters I and II

[11]For an excellent review of A Theory of Justice see Hampshire (1972).

these will demand considerable thought and debate and this task also represents work to be done.

(6) While it is agreed that further specification in several important areas is desirable no orientation is likely to be proposed that will be sufficiently specific for all. Further, it is argued here that at least some basic agreement as to the orientation is a necessary first step that precedes settling on a specified form of it. Further, it is assumed that even when adopted any orientation will continually be revised and reformulated. The profession of medicine is clearly oriented toward health and yet what constitutes health and the means by which it may best be arrived at are continually being revised. As useful as the general orientation toward justice is to the legal profession, the exact nature of justice is under continual debate and refinement, and the necessary basic orientation toward justice which is commonly held does not specify what is just in a particular case. Similarly, sociology's epistemic orientation is similarly highly general and subject to debate as to its exact nature and the means by which to best arrive at it. These are questions that are open to debate. We are not here in any way trying to minimize the difficulties involved in carrying such a debate to conclusion; we are only suggesting that the choice of an orientation most probably precedes it. While

there are differences in conceptions of the orientation, all that is necessary is that there be some basic agreement as to its nature to allow the debate to be fruitful. And while the freedom orientation suffers from the same lack of specificity as do other ethics, it similarly makes possible the lower level value choices, and as a result represents a gain in specificity over previous positions.

We need no longer call for the explication of what it is that we value - we may explicitly state that we value the optimization of alternatives for every individual. When we are asked "knowledge for what?" - or to what is sociological research and theory relevant - we may reply: freedom. Further, this same freedom has now been specified as the "ultimate benefit" to which sociology is directed.

We assume that the debate concerning the role and nature of values within sociology is valuable, and is a debate that is likely to continue. This work has not held as its goal the end of debate, but rather the furthering of it by adding clarity to current positions as well as suggesting both a new position and bases for positions which might serve as new foci for further debate. The "value free" and related positions are neither descriptively nor proscriptively useful for the discipline as it is and seems likely to continue. Although recent counter positions have performed a valuable service in pointing weaknesses in the value free stance and in showing the need

for an extra-epistemic orientation, they have not made explicit the nature of, nor offered bases for the choice of such an orientation which would at once embody a goal for the discipline and at the same time orient the numerous decisions which must be made, and which demands reference to values in addition to that of expanding our knowledge. Two possible bases for the choice of an orientation have been examined - the sceptic's view and the naturalistic-evolutionary view. Both views while critical of one another and representing fundamentally divergent world views, suggest and support an orientation that demands the search for social structures that optimize alternatives open to societal members.

We may now turn to the question of alternatives for one final time. The most basic alternatives open to the profession are to choose an orientation that optimizes alternatives, or to choose for societal members the maximization of some other value end and abridge their right to choose.

Similarly, we must choose whether to promote a wider number of alternatives thus opening paths of evolutionary development, or allow possible courses of development to be closed by perfecting social structures in congruence with some particular value which would be given pre-eminence. The most basic choice facing sociology is to

widen objectively existent areas of choice or to allow our knowledge to be employed to minimize open alternatives. Future debate will hopefully take this basic choice into account. In this way it is hoped that the present work has contributed to the evolution of the debate - even if the debate is ultimately of only assumptive value.

The intriguing observation has been made that "values are the children of misery." It is intriguing because it is unclear exactly why values are children of misery. Values could be children of misery because they are discovered in situations where misery is present. They could be children of misery because they are the cause and the center of bitter controversy between those who consider them undeniably correct and sacred and those who consider them irrelevant. Or values could be children of misery in that they create misery when the situation allows no way of actualizing them. Which interpretation is chosen matters little. Values would likely be less the children of misery if they were raised in an optimizing society.

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